

Chavismo Without Chavez

Symbolic Inauguration Rallies Chavez Supporters

Supporters of Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez cheer during the symbolic inauguration ceremony outside Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013

(AP Photo/Fernando Llano)
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Symbolic inauguration rallies Chavez supporters

**C. TOOTHAKER
IAN JAMES**
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Nothing shows the extent of Hugo Chavez's grip on power quite as clearly as his absence from his own inauguration Thursday.

Venezuela gathered foreign allies and tens of thousands of exuberant supporters to celebrate a new term for a leader too ill to return home for a real swearing-in.

In many ways, it looked like the sort of rally the president has staged dozens of times throughout his 14 years in power: The leader's face beamed from shirts, signs and banners.

Adoring followers danced and chanted in the

As for the symbolic street rally, Pino said, "perhaps it's the first chapter of what they call Chavismo without Chavez."

Yet in the crowd outside the presidential palace, many insisted that Chavez was still present in their hearts, testifying to his success in forging a tight bond of identity with millions of poor Venezuelans.

The crowd chanted: "We are all Chavez!" Some wore paper cutouts of the yellow, blue and red presidential sash to show they were symbolically swearing in themselves in, in Chavez's place.

Those in the crowd raised their hands and repeated an oath after Vice President Nicolas Maduro, Chavez's designated suc-

surgery in Cuba that he has made no broadcast statement in more than a month, and has not appeared in a single photo. Officials have not specified what sort of cancer he suffers or which hospital is treating him.

Yet the opposition, limping off of two recent electoral defeats, seems powerless to effectively challenge him, and critics see their impotence in the battle over his new inauguration as an example of how the president and his allies have, both previously and now, bent the country's democratic system to suit their purposes.

Despite opposition claims that the constitution demands a Jan. 10 inauguration, the pro-Chavez

Cuba, and by Cubans," she told The Associated Press.

Opposition leaders called for protests on Jan. 23, the anniversary of the fall of the country's last dictatorship in 1958.

But it is unclear how much support the opposition's complaints can generate amid an outpouring of public sympathy for the ailing president, and with Latin American neighbors either supporting the government's stance or reluctant to step into Venezuela's domestic affairs.

The government invited foreign leaders to add political weight to Thursday's event, and they filled a stage in front of the presidential palace as Maduro addressed the crowd and called it a "historic event."

A recording of Chavez singing the national anthem suddenly appeared, and his followers sang along. At the end, his voice boomed: "Long live the Bolivarian Revolution!"

Sitting beside Maduro were presidents including Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, Evo Morales of Bolivia and Jose Mujica of Uruguay. The government said officials from about 20 other nations were on hand.

Argentine Foreign Minister Hector Timerman said President Cristina Fernandez was traveling to Havana on Thursday to see Chavez. Some raised the possibility of Chavez's death, though no one uttered the word.

"There's a man who's fighting a battle for his life, who is in all of your hearts," Mujica told the crowd. "But if he isn't here tomorrow, unity, peace and work, dear friends."

While the visiting leaders spoke, fighter jets thundered overhead, flying low. Members of the Cabinet waved to them, and the crowd went wild waving flags. One of the warplanes did a roll.

Militia troops in fatigues stood in formation. Soldiers and police guarded street corners while hip-hop artists performed in the morning on stages set up along the avenue. □



President Barack Obama shakes hands with current White House Chief of Staff Jack Lew in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013, where he announced he will nominate Lew as the next Treasury Secretary.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

Obama picks Jack Lew for US Treasury

JIM KUHNHENN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jack Lew, nominated for Treasury secretary Thursday by President Barack Obama, has honed his skills in the trenches of fiscal policy, helping forge major deals encompassing Social Security and budgets for 30 years, since the Reagan and Clinton administrations.

Lew has had a hand in some of the biggest economic deals negotiated in Washington. What awaits him if he's confirmed could far exceed any challenge of the past — a triple-decked potential crisis that will test his experience the moment he opens his office door on the third floor of the Treasury Building.

Obama highlighted Lew's experience in announcing the selection, an unmistakable nod to the fast-approaching deadlines to raise the government borrowing limit, avert deep and immediate spending cuts and extend government operations.

"I trust his judgment," Obama said. "I value his friendship. I know very few people with greater integrity." □



A supporter of Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez holds up a painting of him during a symbolic inauguration rally for Chavez outside Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013.

(AP Photo/Fernando Llano)

streets to music blaring from speakers mounted on trucks. Nearly everyone wore red, the color of his Bolivarian Revolution movement, as the swelling crowd spilled from the main avenue onto side streets.

But this time, there was no Chavez on the balcony of Miraflores Palace.

It was the first time in Venezuela's history that a president has missed his inauguration, said Elias Pino Iturrieta, a prominent historian.

cessor: "I swear by the Bolivarian Constitution that I will defend the presidency of commander Chavez in the street, with reason, with the truth!"

"Viva Chavez!" Maduro said. He called for a round of applause for the president's Cabinet ministers, saying they were starting a new term, and he said of Chavez, "he's in a battle." The Venezuelan leader, normally at the center of national attention, is so ill following a fourth cancer

congress approved delaying the inauguration and the Supreme Court on Wednesday endorsed the postponement, saying the president could be sworn in before the court at a later date.

Opposition lawmaker Maria Corina Machado called that a "well-aimed coup against the Venezuelan Constitution" and echoed other critics' suspicions that foreign allies are influencing events in Venezuela: "It's being directed from

AROUND THE WORLD

Israeli police: blast criminally motivated

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — A bomb exploded in a car near a bus in Tel Aviv on Thursday in what police said was a criminally motivated assassination attempt. The explosion went off close to the site of a bus bombing in November. Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said an investigation was under way and that the target was an underworld figure. He could not confirm the identity of the man targeted. Media reported that the man was Nissim Alperon, head of one of the country's most powerful crime families. Alperon has often escaped death. Thursday's attack was the ninth assassination attempt he has survived in the past 12 years. □

Spaniard in Cuba death may get release

MADRID (AP) — A Spanish man involved in a traffic crash in Cuba that killed a prominent dissident may be allowed to serve out his four-year sentence in his country under a work release program. The 27-year-old Angel Carromero was sentenced in October in a July 22 crash in eastern Cuba that killed pro-democracy activist Oswaldo Paya and fellow dissident Harold Cepero. Carromero, a regional leader of the Popular Party, was driving the car. The dissidents were seated in the back. Spanish prison officials said Thursday that Carromero, currently imprisoned northwest of Madrid, could be placed in a work release program in the coming days. □

Court finds 3 guilty of glorifying Nazism

VIENNA (AP) — An Austrian court has convicted a leading neo-Nazi and two accomplices of glorifying Nazism through a website and sentenced them to prison terms of up to nine years. Gottfried Kuessel was given a nine-year prison sentence Thursday for being the founder of the "Alpen-Donau" website. He already spent time in prison in the 1990s on conviction of trying to form a successor to the Nazi party. The two others — Felix Binder and Wilhelm Anderle — were sentenced to seven and 4 ½ years respectively. The website is no longer active, but defied years of Austrian efforts to shut it down because it was housed on a U.S. server. □

Large reptile found guarding drugs dies

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Authorities in Northern California made a snappy discovery during a routine probation check: An alligator-like reptile named "Mr. Teeth," who was apparently protecting a stash of marijuana. When Alameda County Sheriff's deputies entered the Castro Valley home on Tuesday, they not only found 34 pounds of marijuana valued at an estimated \$100,000, but also the 5-foot (1.52-meter)-long caiman inside a Plexiglas tank guarding it in a bedroom. The caiman was very sick when it arrived at the zoo's veterinary hospital, zoo spokesman Nicky Mora said Thursday. "The veterinarian said he passed away overnight," Mora said. □

Mexico hopes for stronger US gun laws

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's newly named ambassador to the United States says he hopes the U.S. imposes new gun-control laws that will help reduce violence in Mexico. Ambassador Eduardo Medina Mora said Thursday that the Newtown shootings had raised outrage to the point where previously unfeasible legal changes may be possible. Mexico says U.S. guns, particularly assault weapons, help fuel drug cartel-related violence. □

Panetta:

US in 'last chapter' of Afghan war

ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Thursday that the U.S.-led coalition has advanced to the "last chapter" of an 11-year struggle to ensure that Afghanistan can defend itself. The endgame to which Panetta referred

raised by many about his views on Israel and Iran.

"I think a lot of the criticisms that are being made right now are unfair," Panetta said, adding that he would leave it to Hagel to address these at his Senate confirmation hearing, the date for which has not yet been set.

"In these confirmation

after 2014, but it may spell out specific examples of U.S. aid.

"We made very good progress on, you know, the kind of equipment that we would try to make available to them," to enable the Afghans to not only secure their borders but also prevent a Taliban takeover, Panetta said.



Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, accompanied by Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey, gestures during a news conference at the Pentagon, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013. Panetta said he is asking his department to begin taking steps to freeze civilian hiring, delay some contract awards and curtail some maintenance to prepare for drastic budget cuts if Congress can't reach an agreement on a final spending plan.

(AP Photo/ Evan Vucci)

is punctuated with uncertainty, beginning with doubts about whether the Afghan government can build legitimacy by credibly serving its population. Also in question is whether Afghan security forces will be capable of holding off the Taliban after international forces leave in 2014. Panetta, who intends to quit his post within weeks, held an hour-long, one-on-one meeting at the Pentagon with Afghan President Hamid Karzai. The Pentagon chief said afterward that they had made "very good progress" on key issues, including the basis for an agreement on continued U.S. assistance after the combat mission ends. Panetta also predicted that his designated successor, former Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, will be confirmed by the Senate, despite questions

battles there are a lot of charges that will be out there," he added. "There will be a lot of criticisms that are out there. But ultimately, the truth prevails. And I think the truth in this case will mean that he'll be confirmed."

Panetta said he is confident, after having met with Hagel to discuss the transition, that the Vietnam War veteran is committed to the plan for gradually shifting responsibility for Afghanistan's security to Afghan forces so that foreign forces can leave in two years.

Panetta told a news conference that he and Karzai had laid the groundwork for the Afghan leader's meeting at the White House on Friday with President Barack Obama. That session is not expected to clarify the size of any U.S. military role in Afghanistan

Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the same news conference that U.S. and Afghan officials are developing a common assessment of threats Afghanistan is likely to face in the future. Conclusions from that study will help determine the full range of Afghanistan's military requirements, he said. U.S. commanders in Afghanistan have proposed options for keeping between 6,000 and 15,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan after 2014 to continue pressuring terrorists and further develop Afghan security forces. But the White House has aimed even lower, telling reporters on Tuesday that Obama would be open to the possibility of withdrawing entirely in 2014, so long as he can be confident that Afghanistan can stand on its own. □

Biden clashes with gun lobby over control proposals

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration is assembling proposals to curb gun violence that would include a ban on sales of assault weapons, limits on high-capacity ammunition magazines and universal background checks for gun buyers. The country's most powerful pro-gun group made clear its opposition to such moves. President Barack Obama has pushed reducing gun violence to the top of his domestic agenda following last month's massacre of 20 children and six adults at a Connecticut elementary school. The president put Vice President Joe Biden in charge of an administration-wide task force and set a late

January deadline for proposals. Sketching out details of the plan Thursday, Biden said he would give Obama a set of recommendations by next Tuesday. The National Rifle Association, one of the pro-gun groups that met with Biden during the day, rejected the effort to limit ammunition and dug in on its opposition to an assault weapons ban, which Obama has previously said he will propose to Congress. "The vice president made it clear, made it explicitly clear, that the president had already made up his mind on those issues," NRA president David Keene said following the meeting. "We made it clear that we disagree with them." □



Vice President Joe Biden speaks during a meeting with Sportsmen and Women and Wildlife Interest Groups and member of his cabinet, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013, in Washington. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

Judge says Colorado shooting suspect will face trial

DAN ELLIOTT
Associated Press
CENTENNIAL, Colorado
(AP) — A Colorado judge says there's enough evidence for James Holmes to face trial on charges that

allege he killed 12 people and injured 70 others in a movie theater last summer. Judge William Sylvester said Thursday that prosecutors have established probable cause on more than

160 felony counts. Holmes is due to be arraigned Friday, but his defense attorneys filed papers Thursday saying he's not ready to enter a plea. They are likely to ask for the ar-

raignment to be delayed. Sylvester found, as expected, that prosecutors have marshaled enough evidence to take Holmes to trial, which means he could arraign Holmes and

require him to enter a plea. Defense attorneys did not explain why they are not ready for that. Holmes' attorneys made the requests in a filing that also objected to media requests to bring cameras into the courtroom. Other than during his brief initial appearance in July, cameras have been barred from court during Holmes' case. During a three-day hearing earlier this week, prosecutors laid out their case against Holmes, 25. A succession of police and federal agents testified that Holmes spent weeks amassing guns and ammunition, concocted explosives to booby-trap his apartment and scouted the movie theater where he would allegedly unleash a horrific attack on hundreds of terrified people. The officers also described a hellish scene inside the theater on July 20, when 12 people were shot to death before their families and friends' eyes and scores of others were wounded amid a din of gunshots, screams and the blaring soundtrack of "The Dark Knight Rises." □

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1 student shot at rural high school in California

TAFT, California (AP) — A 16-year-old student armed with a shotgun walked into class in a rural California high school on Thursday and shot one student, fired at another and missed, and then was talked into surrendering by a teacher and another staff member, officials said.

The teen victim was in critical but stable condition, Kern County Sheriff Donny Youngblood told a news conference. The sheriff said the teacher at Taft Union High School suffered a minor pellet wound to the head and declined treatment.

The attack there came less than a month after a gunman massacred 20 children and six women at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, then killed himself.

That shooting prompted President Barack Obama to promise new efforts to

curb gun violence. Vice President Joe Biden, who was placed in charge of the initiative, said he would deliver new policy proposals to the president by next week.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a California Democrat, said in a statement that her father had attended Taft

Union and she has visited the school over the years.

"At this moment my thoughts and prayers are with the victims, and I wish them a speedy recovery," Feinstein said. "But how many more shootings must there be in America before we come to the realization that guns and grievances

do not belong together?" The Taft gunman had as many as 20 rounds of ammunition in his pocket, the sheriff said.

When the shots were fired, the teacher tried to get the more than two dozen stu-

dents out a back door and also engaged the shooter in conversation to distract him, Youngblood said.

A campus supervisor responding to a call of shots fired also began talking to the gunman. □



Paramedics transport a student wounded during a shooting Thursday Jan. 10, 2013 at San Joaquin Valley high school in Taft, Calif. (AP Photo/Doug Keeler)

New law extends protection for Bush, Obama, successors

STEWART M. POWELL

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WASHINGTON — Without fanfare, President Obama on Thursday ended a two-tiered system of U.S. Secret Service protection for former presidents. Now, all former chief executives will receive lifelong, round-the-clock protection.

The president signed legislation into law to extend protection from 10 years to lifelong for former presidents who served after

1997. Before the change, former President George W. Bush had been scheduled to lose U.S. Secret Service protection 10 years after leaving office in 2019 and Obama would have lost post-presidential protection 10 years after leaving office in 2027. First ladies, including Laura Bush and Michelle Obama, will also receive lifetime protection. The Bushes are living in Dallas, Texas and maintain their ranch in

Crawford, Texas.

"Former presidents engage in numerous activities, diplomatic and humanitarian efforts overseas, and they're still symbols of our country," said a Secret Service official speaking on condition of anonymity. "That's one of the reasons we felt it was good to have (protection) for life," the official said. "They could be potential targets for those seeking to do harm." □

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Obama eases immigration rule for family of U.S. citizens

Laura Green
 © 2013 Cox Newspapers
WASHINGTON -- Immigrants who are in the United States illegally but have a spouse, child or parent who is a citizen may soon have a quicker road to obtaining permission to live in the country lawfully. A new rule announced this week will allow immigrants, starting March 4, to apply for a waiver and then re-

turn to their home country to get a visa. The waiver requires them to prove that their absence would cause an extreme hardship for their relative who is a citizen. Immigrants currently making that same hardship case have to leave the country, risking that they may never be able to return, in order to begin the process of building a legal

life in America. "The law is designed to avoid extreme hardship to U.S. citizens, which is precisely what this rule achieves," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Director Alejandro Mayorkas said. "The change will have a significant impact on American families by greatly reducing the time family members are separated from those they rely upon."

Families have been separated for months and even years, and are typically separated for six to nine months just during the first step of getting a waiver. Now immigrants will be able to seek a waiver before leaving the United States. Once they have gone through a background check and received the waiver, they must still return to their home country, submit to an interview and be

approved by the State Department before they are issued a visa. "It's a step in the right direction," said William Cavanaugh, a West Palm Beach, Fla., immigration attorney. "They need to pass something that's going to affect people on a bigger scale." President Barack Obama has promised to make immigration reform a priority in his second term. □

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Tough lawmaker back in Nebraska's capitol

JOHN ELIGON
 © 2013 New York Times
LINCOLN, Neb. – They came to him with hugs and elbow bumps (he rarely shakes hands), wide grins and hearty backslaps. "I'm very pleased to see you again," one man said. "I'm excited," a woman said, leaning in for an embrace.

A wave of love greeted Ernie Chambers, Nebraska's irascible state senator, as he resumed his marathon legislative career on Wednesday after having sat out the last four years because of a term limits law that he believes was targeted at him. His tenure was interrupted in 2008 after voters approved term limits that bar senators from serving more than two consecutive four-year terms. (He had already served nine straight.)

But they may return after sitting out a term, and Chambers, 75, in November defeated Brenda Council, who had taken his seat when he left. Chambers, who does not align himself with any mainstream political party, gamely returned the pleasantries on the opening day of Nebraska's legislative session, but with a healthy dose of skepticism. Over a four-decade career in the unicameral Legislature here – longer than any Nebraska senator's – Chambers developed a reputation as the chamber's most passionate and peskiest member. A master

of process and procedure, he will do whatever necessary to derail a bill he does not like. His candor can leave a trail of hurt feelings. So it remains to be seen how long his colleagues'

land boots. He sported the same white beard and dome of white hair he has had for years. He spoke poetically. Where other senators sat in the chamber as they conducted business,



Nebraska State Sen. Ernie Chambers, center, at the state Capitol in Lincoln, Neb. Chambers resumed his legislative career on this week after having sat out the last four years because of a term limits law that he believes was targeted at him.
 (Brian Lehmann/The New York Times)

smiles will last. "If you were approaching a black panther, and he's not in his cage, then you're not going to do anything to antagonize him," said Chambers, who in 1971 became the first black elected to the Nebraska Legislature. "Time will tell how real any of this is." Later, he added, "I'm probably the most hated man in this state." Not one for sentimentality or formality, Chambers returned to the state Capitol much the way he left four years ago: wearing blue-jeans cuffed at the ankles, a short-sleeve sweatshirt and dark brown Timber-

Chambers stood, leaning on a desk behind him and clasping his fingers. Fellow legislators, their staffers, chamber guards and even a postal worker flocked to say hello. Some already wanted to talk policy. Chambers told one man that he did not care about another person's politics. "My whole thing is how I get along with that person," he said. The mill of well-wishers seemed a bit much for a man who says he prefers solitude. "This is hard for me," he whispered to his daughter, Gayla, as they stood at the back of the Senate floor. □

California teacher's fund to divest of gun stock

MARY W. WALSH
MICHAEL COOPER

© 2013 New York Times
One of the United States' largest pension funds began Wednesday to divest

panies like the Freedom Group, the maker of the Bushmaster semiautomatic rifle that authorities say Adam Lanza used to kill 20 first-graders and six adults

for teachers and retirees. It took CalSTRS several years to divest its tobacco holdings. Keiley predicted that the firearms industry would come under market pres-

chusetts, have said they were searching their portfolios for firearms investments. But some of them have also expressed concerns about their fiduciary duties. "We can't manage the pension fund based on whatever the hot issue of the moment is," Thomas P. DiNapoli, the sole trustee of New York state's pension fund for state and municipal workers, said in a radio interview.

He said he had found weapons holdings worth about \$15 million, out of a \$150 billion portfolio, and

was still deliberating over what steps to take. "There are big questions about gun manufacturers, and where we're headed as a society," he told WNYC. Many pension investments in gun companies have been made through private equity partnerships, which usually run for many years and are hard to leave early without taking a loss. Officials of several pension funds with stakes in the Freedom Group said that in keeping with the usual practice in private equities. □



California Treasurer Bill Lockyer, who tangled with the National Rifle association during his term as the state's attorney general, at a California State Teachers Retirement System meeting in West Sacramento, Calif. Lockyer made the motion to design and execute a plan to divest from all companies that make guns that are illegal in California.

(Jim Wilson/The New York Times)

itself of firearms holdings, a response to the school-house shooting in Newtown, Conn., that other pension funds could follow. The California State Teachers Retirement System, known as CalSTRS, voted unanimously to begin its formal divestment process. The vote occurred at a public meeting where teachers said they did not want their retirement nest eggs placed with com-

at the Sandy Hook Elementary School on Dec. 14. "This latest incident, which occurred at a school and involved fellow educators and the children we cherish, is a tipping point for CalSTRS," said Harry Keiley, chairman of the fund's investment committee.

Divestment involves several steps, to make sure fund officials comply with their fiduciary duty to protect the assets being accumulated

sure that could make it an unsound investment.

The move puts the California teachers' fund at the forefront of a movement to reconsider whether investing in firearms is an appropriate way for states and cities to cover the retirement costs of their workers. Since the shootings, officials of other public pension funds, including those in New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massa-

Cuomo urges swift action on gun laws

THOMAS KAPLAN
© 2013 New York Times

ALBANY, N.Y. — Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo said Thursday that it would be a dereliction of duty for lawmakers not to pass new gun laws but that he did not have a timetable for pushing a bill through the state Legislature. Negotiations among aides to the governor and legislative leaders continued at the Capitol, a day after Cuomo called for new gun laws in his State of the State address. Speaking to reporters after getting a flu shot at the Capitol, he again made it clear that, after the shootings in Newtown, Conn., and Webster, N.Y., last month, he was exasperated and impatient over the issue of gun violence and

wanted the Legislature to take swift action.

"A majority of the people of this state are saying enough is enough," Cuomo said. "Something has to be done. How many lives have to be lost? How many innocents have to be lost?"

The governor, a Democrat, called on Wednesday for lawmakers to expand the state's ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines and put in place other gun controls, including requiring background checks for ammunition purchases and the periodic recertification of gun licenses.

On Thursday, Cuomo said he was open to making changes in his gun-control package based on feed-

back from lawmakers but did not get into specifics about where he was willing to compromise. Cuomo said Republicans in the state Senate wanted fewer gun restrictions than he had proposed, while Democrats in the Assembly had "sensitivity" to increased penalties for gun crimes that are being sought by Republicans.

Cuomo also said there was a disagreement over what to do with assault weapons that are now legally owned but would be outlawed under an expanded ban; last month, he said that "confiscation could be an option," a remark that set off anxiety among gun owners. (He has not repeated that comment in recent days.) □

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Wave of bombings kill 115 in Pakistan

ABDUL SATTAR SEBASTIAN ABBOT
Associated Press

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP) — A series of bombings killed 115 people across Pakistan on Thursday, including 81 who died in twin blasts on a bustling billiards hall in a Shiite area of the southwestern city of Quetta.

Pakistan's minority Shiite Muslims have increasingly been targeted by radical Sunnis who consider them heretics, and a militant Sunni group claimed responsibility for Thursday's deadliest attack — sending a suicide bomber into the packed pool hall and then detonating a car bomb five minutes later.

It was one of the deadliest days in recent years for a country that is no stranger to violence from radical Islamists, militant separatists and criminal gangs.

Violence has been especially intense in southwest Baluchistan province, where Quetta is the capital and the country's largest concentration of Shiites live. Many are ethnic Hazara who migrated from neighboring Afghanistan.

The billiards hall targeted Thursday was located in an area dominated by the minority sect. In addition to the 81 dead, more than 120 people were wounded in the double bombing, said police officer Zubair Mehmood. The dead included police officers, journalists and rescue workers who responded to the initial explosion.

Ghulam Abbas, a Shiite who lives about 150 yard (meters) from the billiards

hall, said he was at home with his family when the first blast occurred. He was trying to decide whether to head to the scene when the second bomb went off. "The second blast was a deafening one, and I fell down," he said. "I could hear cries and minutes later I saw ambulances taking the injured to the hospital." Hospitals and a local mor-

militant group with strong ties to the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the attack. Hazara Shiites, who migrated from Afghanistan more than a century ago, have been the targets of dozens of attacks by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in Quetta over the past year, but Thursday's was by far the bloodiest. Human Rights Watch

started on an even more dismal note," said Ali Dayan Hasan, Pakistan director at Human Rights Watch.

"As Shia community members continue to be slaughtered in cold blood, the callousness and indifference of authorities offers a damning indictment of the state, its military and security agencies," Hasan said. "Pakistan's tolerance

Mali: Islamists clash with military, take key town

BABA AHMED KRISTA LARSON
Associated Press

BAMAKO, Mali (AP) — The Islamists who rule northern Mali clashed with government forces for the first time in nearly a year, seizing a strategic city Thursday as the al-Qaida-linked militants pushed toward the government line of control in the center of the troubled country.

The capture of the city of Konna marks a dangerous escalation in the Islamists' confrontation with the Malian government, which is based hundreds of miles (kilometers) to the south in the capital, Bamako.

The fighting in central Mali also comes amid speculation that a regional military intervention to oust the extremists may not come until September at the earliest.

The Islamists seized the town of Douentza four months ago after brief standoff with a local militia, but pushed no further until clashes broke out late Wednesday in Konna, a town of 50,000 people, where fearful residents covered inside their homes.

"We have chased the army out of the city of Konna, which we have occupied since 11 a.m.," declared Sanda Abou Mohamed, a spokesman for the Ansar Dine militant group, speaking by telephone from Timbuktu. □



Pakistani volunteers rush a young injured victim from a bomb blast in a commercial area to a local hospital in Quetta, Pakistan, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013. (AP Photo/Arshad Butt)

tuary were overwhelmed as the dead and wounded arrived throughout the evening. Weeping relatives gathered outside the emergency room at Quetta's Civil Hospital. Inside the morgue, bodies were laid out on the floor. The bombs severely damaged the three-story building where the pool hall was located and set it on fire. It also damaged nearby shops, homes and offices.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a Sunni

sharply criticized the Pakistani government for not doing enough to crack down on the killings and protect the country's vulnerable Shiite community. It said more than 400 Shiites were killed in targeted attacks in Pakistan in 2012, including over 120 in Baluchistan.

"2012 was the bloodiest year for Pakistan's Shia community in living memory and if this latest attack is any indication, 2013 has

for religious extremists is not just destroying lives and alienating entire communities, it is destroying Pakistani society across the board." Pakistan's intelligence agencies helped nurture Sunni militant groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in the 1980s, to counter a perceived threat from neighboring Iran, which is mostly Shiite. Pakistan banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in 2001, but the group continues to operate fairly freely. □

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Kremlin: Adoptions deal with US valid until 2014

VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP)—The Kremlin said Thursday that an adoption deal with the U.S. will remain valid until 2014 despite a new Russian law banning the practice, but no new adoptions will be permitted and only those already cleared by Russian courts before the ban will be allowed to complete. Last month, President Vladimir Putin signed a law banning Americans from adopting Russian children, part of a harsh response to a U.S. law targeting Russians deemed to be violating human rights. Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on independent Dozhd (Rain) TV that the adoptions agreement

will remain in force until Jan. 1, 2014 due to its provision that it should be valid for a year after one of the parties terminates it, which Russia did on Jan. 1. But he added that all new adoptions and also those which hadn't been completed before the new law took effect will be banned. "In cases when certain judicial procedures haven't been completed, a complete ban on adoptions by U.S. parents will be enforced," Peskov said. "The agreement isn't a mechanism that obliges Russia to provide its children for adoptions. It regulates the regime for our children there, the monitoring mechanism." Peskov said that those Rus-



Russian President Vladimir Putin looks on during a meeting in the Kremlin in Moscow.

(AP Photo/Alexei Nikolsky)

sian children whose adoption by U.S. families had been cleared by Russian courts will be allowed to leave. More than 50 Russian children were preparing to join their new families in the U.S. when the ban on adoptions was passed, but it wasn't immediately clear how many of them already got a court order allowing them to leave Russia by the time the ban was introduced. "With regard to those who

had failed to leave even though all formalities had been completed, and if there are some local abuses, we will naturally consider those cases," Peskov said. Russian and U.S. diplomats have been in intense talks over the issue. "We are very hopeful that we will be able to complete the cases of adoption that had been begun before the law was passed. So that's something that we will be working on with

the Russian government," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said Thursday. She said that in response to the State Department's request for information from American families who were trying to adopt, it had received e-mails from some 950 people and was evaluating where each party stood in the process. Nuland added that U.S. officials would prefer not to get into specifics because "we want to see as many children be able to have the future that we'd like for them as possible, and we don't want to be putting people in different categories." She also said there are privacy concerns with regard to both the Americans and the children. Although some top Russian officials including the foreign minister openly opposed the bill, Putin signed it into law in less than 24 hours after receiving it from the parliament, which overwhelmingly passed it. □

Poll: Most of Ireland favors greater access to abortions

SHAWN POGATCHNIK

Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP)—Most people in Ireland want lawmakers to give women wider access to abortion, a poll revealed Thursday as senior clerics testified before a parliamentary committee investigating Ireland's ban on the practice. Prime Minister Enda Kenny's government has pledged to legalize abortion for women whose lives are deemed in danger

from a pregnancy, including those who threaten to commit suicide if denied an abortion. Opponents of abortion argue that the suicide-threat rule would be open to deceit and permit increasingly broad access to abortion in this predominantly Catholic country. The move has been delayed in Ireland for two decades despite a 1992 Supreme Court ruling that life-saving abortions should be Irish law. □

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Political motive claimed in murder of 3 Kurds in Paris

SARAH DILORENZO
SUZAN FRASER
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Three Kurdish activists, including reportedly one of the founding members of a militant separatist group, were shot dead in what authorities called an “execution” in central Paris. The slayings prompted speculation that the long-running conflict between insurgents from the minority group and Turkey was playing out on French shores. The slayings came as Turkey was holding peace talks with the Kurdistan Workers Party, which seeks self-rule for Kurds in the country’s southeast, to try to persuade it to disarm. The conflict between the group,

known as the PKK, and the Turkish government has claimed tens of thousands of lives since 1984. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said at a news conference in Senegal on Thursday that his country was determined to press ahead with the talks despite the events in Paris, which he suggested could be the result of internal strife or an act to sabotage the talks. The PKK does have a history of internal killings. But many Kurdish activists and militants were also victims of extra-judicial killings blamed on Turkish government forces in the 1990s. Initial reports were contradictory but pointed to a grisly crime scene. One



One of the three bodies of the killed Kurdish women is taken out of the building in Paris, Thursday Jan. 10, 2013. Police say three Kurdish women have been shot dead at a pro-Kurdish centre in Paris in what the French interior minister is calling an ‘execution’. (AP Photo/Remy de la Mauviniere)

Kurdish organization said the door of the building where the women were found just after midnight was smeared with blood, that two of the women were shot in the neck and one in the stomach and

that the killer used a silencer. French radio reported that all three were shot in the head. The killings set off a round of accusations, with each side accusing the other of being behind the deaths.

Police tried to contain hundreds of Kurds who flocked to the building in eastern Paris where the bodies were found Thursday, many blaming Turkey and calling the deaths a “political assassination.” It was not clear if any of the women were currently members of the PKK, which Turkey, the U.S. and the European Union consider a terrorist organization. President Francois Hollande said he and several politicians knew one of the women professionally. He did not say which one. Turkey’s Anadolu news agency identified one of the victims as Sakine Cansiz, a founding member of the PKK in her 50s, but French authorities have not confirmed that. The Paris prosecutors’ office did confirm that the other two victims were Leyla Soylemez and Fidan Dogan, both in their 20s. □



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Japan OKs over \$224B in fresh stimulus

ELAINE KURTENBACH
MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The Japanese Cabinet approved a fresh stimulus spending of more than 20 trillion yen (\$224 billion) on Friday, rushing to fulfill campaign pledges to break the world's third-biggest economy out of its deflationary slump. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the decision at a news conference where he said the new measures were intended to add 2 percent to Japan's economic growth and contribute 600,000 new jobs. Abe urged the central bank to move more aggressively to encourage lending and meet a clear inflation target. Abe took office late last month after a parliamentary election victory by the Liberal Democratic Party, which is touting public works spending and subsidies to strategically important sectors as part of its plan to pull the economy out of recession. The prime minister, who also served as prime minister in 2006-2007, has vowed to make reviving the economy his top prior-

ity, promising support both to small businesses and big industries such as the auto sector. The stimulus deal required wrangling over tax reform and other issues with the Liberal Democrat's coalition partner, the New Komeito. Abe and his ministers also sought support for his program from big business in a whirlwind round of appearances at new year parties this week. “We will work with you and appreciate your cooperation,” industry minister Toshimitsu Motegi told a gathering of Japanese auto executives, describing the car industry as the “main hitter” of the Japanese economy. “Without a revival of the auto industry there will be no rebirth of Japan,” he declared. The bulk of the spending package will go to supporting industrial revitalization and reconstruction from Japan's March 2011 earthquake and tsunami disasters. It also includes plans a request to raise military spending by 100 billion yen (\$1.1 billion) from the 4.6 trillion yen (\$52.3 billion) budget last year, the first such increase in a decade. □



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Syrian rebels seize parts of strategic air base

ZEINA KARAM
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Hundreds of Islamic militants fighting to topple Syrian President Bashar Assad seized parts of a strategic northwestern air base Thursday after weeks of battling government troops for control of the sprawling facility. At stake is the biggest field for helicopters used to bomb rebel-held areas in the north and deliver supplies for regime forces. Opposition fighters and activists said rebels broke into Taftanaz air base in the northern Idlib province Wednesday night and by Thursday had seized control of more than half of it. Intense battles were still raging, and one activist said rebels had suffered losses.

On Thursday evening, an activist near Taftanaz said the government bombed the air base from warplanes in a desperate attempt to push back rebels who seized several helicopters. The account from the activist, who requested anonymity out of fear of reprisals, could not immediately be confirmed.

An amateur video posted by activists online showed smoke rising from behind helicopters parked at the

major prisoner swap of the civil war. The rebel attack on the Taftanaz base is part of a wide-

sieging Taftanaz for months and launched an offensive to take the base in early November.

Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Taftanaz lies near the highway between the capital Damascus and the northern city of Aleppo, a major front in a civil war that has locked rebels and government troops in a stalemate for months. Several past rebel attempts to capture the Taftanaz base have failed. Abdul-Rahman, who relies on a network of activists on the ground in Syria, said the rebels involved in the attack on Taftanaz were Islamic militants. He said estimated their number to be about 700 and said they included members of Jabhat al-Nusra, affiliated with al-Qaida, and groups with a similar Islamic ideology.

Members of al-Nusra, which the U.S. has branded a terrorist organization, have been among the most effective fighters in the rebels' battle to oust Assad. The opposition has seized several other air defense bases in the north and Damascus suburbs, making off with weapons and ammunition but in most cases have not managed to retain the facilities. □



A Syrian rebel fighter walks through a field to maintain tanks hidden among the trees on the frontline of the battle for the military airport in Taftanaz, Syria.

(AP Photo/Mustafa Karali)

Taftanaz tarmac, and a narrator said it was the result of an airstrike. The video appeared consistent with Associated Press reporting. Meanwhile, Iran's official IRNA news agency said 48 former captives held for more than five months returned on Thursday to Tehran after being freed by Syrian rebels in the first

er attempt to chip away at the Syrian regime's air supremacy, which poses the biggest obstacle to the opposition fighters' advances. As its control of large swaths of territory has slipped over the past year, the government has increasingly relied on its warplanes and helicopters to strike rebel-held areas. The rebels have been be-

Its fall would be an embarrassing blow to the regime but not fully stop airstrikes by government jets, many of which come from bases farther south.

"If the fighters seize full control of Taftanaz air base and manage to keep it, it would be the first major military airport to fall into rebel hands," said Rami Abdul-Rahman, director of the

Tunisian prosecutors opposed freeing Libya suspect

B.B. BOUAZZA
Associated Press

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP) — Tunisia's attorney general's office opposed the recent release of one of the only people in custody for the September attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in the Libyan city of Benghazi that killed four Americans, an official said Thursday. The prosecutor's opposition means the decision could be reversed on appeal.

Ali Harzi, a 28-year-old Tunisian, was extradited from Turkey in October and at the time Tunisian authorities said they "strongly suspected" he was involved in the attack, whose victims included U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens. A judge released him Monday night for lack of evidence, dealing a blow to an investigation that has limped along for months. Harzi must, however, re-

main in the Tunis area in case he is needed for further questioning. Fawzi Jaballah, an adviser to Tunisia's Justice Ministry, confirmed Thursday that the attorney general's office had opposed the release. An appeals court will now hear the prosecution's side and could order Harzi be placed back in custody. The FBI, which questioned Harzi for three hours in the

presence of a Tunisian judge in December, declined to comment on the release. On Sept. 11, armed groups assaulted the lightly guarded Benghazi mission and killed Stevens and three other diplomats. There has been little news of progress so far in bringing the perpetrators to justice, and U.S. officials have complained about a lack of cooperation with the

governments of the region, particularly Libya, in the investigation. Mounting a coherent investigation is difficult for the Libyan government "especially in Benghazi" because authorities rely on the militias who fought and helped topple former leader Moammar Gadhafi. It is often difficult to draw clear lines between those providing security and those causing the instability. □



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French taxi drivers' strike clogs roadways

SYLVIE CORBET
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Taxi drivers across France clogged traffic, slowed access to airports and forced would-be passengers to find alternate transport as they held a strike Thursday over government deregulation proposals they fear will cut into their business. Thousands of protesting taxi drivers lined up in single file on roadsides across the country, refused fares or traveled highways at a crawl. At one point in the late morning, a trip into Paris that would normally take 20 minutes was listed on traffic signs at more than two hours. The drivers called it "Operation Escar-got."

Taxi associations oppose

government proposals to allow private companies to transport the sick to medical appointments and allow for new chauffeur businesses. At Paris' Orly airport, with riot police on hand, scores of taxi drivers prevented access to the drop-off point at the West terminal, forcing air travelers to walk further to get inside. After hours of negotiations, the Interior Ministry announced late Thursday that the government wouldn't make any decisions about deregulation without consulting the taxi unions. It also said it would work to eliminate any confusion between the roles of traditional taxis and the new chauffeur businesses. □



Striking taxi drivers burn smoke flares as they block the traffic with their vehicles, in Marseille, southern France, Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013. Taxi drivers across France are putting on the brakes to clog traffic, slow access to airports and force would-be passengers to find alternate transport in a strike over government reforms. (AP Photo/Claude Paris)



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China:

Media protests end; censorship fight unresolved

EDWARD WONG
CHRIS BUCKLEY
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GUANGZHOU, China — The demonstrations have died down and the reporters and editors are back to work at China's most prominent weekly newspaper. Its latest issue was published more or less on schedule. But the paper, Southern Weekend, is sure to remain a crucial battleground over Communist Party censorship. Southern Weekend has been a weather vane for restrictions on news organizations in China since its founding 29 years ago, and its journalists say their frustration with those constraints has been building for years.

The restrictions have tightened since summer, leading to the protests that

erupted at Southern Weekend's offices last week over a heavily rewritten New Year's editorial, one of the sharpest outbreaks of friction so far. The newspaper appeared on newsstands Thursday, after protesting journalists accepted a compromise in which provincial propaganda officials promised to loosen some of the more intrusive censorship controls over their work. The protesting journalists directed their anger at Tuo Zhen, head of party propaganda in Guangdong, whom they blamed for tampering with the New Year's editorial, changing it from an essay urging respect for citizens' constitutional rights into an error-marred paean to party rule. But the closest that anything in the latest

issue came to touching on that controversy was a reprint of a commentary from People's Daily, the Communist Party's main national paper, on the role of the news media. "Party control of the media is a principle, but the manner in which the party controls the media must keep up with the times," Southern Weekend said in reference to the People's Daily commentary. Now Southern Weekend is at the heart of the next big test: whether the Communist Party's new leader, Xi Jinping, intends to extend his broad promises of economic reform into a measure of political liberalization, including more scope for the news media to challenge officials. Much more was at stake than one botched editorial. □



Great news from The Blue Lobster Restaurant!

PALM BEACH - The charming owner of the fabulous Blue Lobster Restaurant, Mr. Castano, shares the following news for all food lovers on Aruba:

"We definitely as a new restaurant, making our debut in the culinary arena of this beautiful island, carefully listen to our patrons and follow the trends of the industry, and we aim to accommodate such trends and circumstances. With a slowly recovering economy in the US, combined with the devastation caused by the recent hurricane to hit the Northeast, we understand that times are a little trying for everyone these days, especially for those who make up the greater share of Aruba's clientele. So the management of the Blue Lobster Restaurant, the island's favorite new eatery, nannounces that as of January 11, 2013, the restaurant's menu is Going Back... YES, Back to our good old prices. Our menu has been revised in an effort to honor our motto: "Good Food, Good Service, And Good Prices!" (Prices available at [www.](http://www.arubabluelobster.com)

www.arubabluelobster.com). And as if this weren't enough, The Blue Lobster has added a variety of exciting new menu items to join the parade of spectacular food choices we already offer! Try our succulent 16oz. porterhouse steak, our 15oz. T-bone steak, the 12oz. fillet mignon or our 12oz. sirloin steak, each prepared with love and mastery: what a treat for meat lovers! And the seafood lovers' party continues with several delicious new dishes, so now seafood lovers can enjoy our fresh red snapper fillet, our wonderful seafood platter, our oven gratinated scallops, the oyster soup (you must try this one), our fresh Wahoo, or our Australian mussels! These are just a few of the new items added to our already extensive menu, which also offers LOBSTER superbly prepared in more than 18 different ways, plus the already famous LIVE LOBSTER! And the list goes on and on.... The Blue Lobster is your place for seafood, and now Prime Choice

USA meat as well! Chef Sandro knows the importance of sitting together as a family for a great meal, so he has also enhanced our Kids Menu, which your kids will love! "Parents can now enjoy their full dish, and kids can have their own: Yes, and at excellent prices too," say Chef Sandro. Patrons can now enjoy a nice and succulent lunch starting under ten bucks. German Castano commented, "We do care for our clientele and do understand hard times need to be sorted out, and working together as a team it becomes easier. The Blue Lobster Restaurant has joined forces with those who want to help others recovering from less good times." The Blue Lobster is also taking on this quest with some attractive promotions available for this season, such as free Visit Aruba Discount cards, (valued at around \$500.00), free coffee with your desert, and free surprises for Birthdays and Anniversary celebrations. So all in all, lots of fun, good food, good prices, good service, and the best culinary experience is just a few steps from the High Rise Hotels. The Blue Lobster is a winner of Trip Advisor's Certificate of Excellence 2012. A visit to this small but excellent restaurant while in Aruba is a must. ☐



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Members of management Gina Tondou, Astrid Muller, Mary Werleman and Theo van Loon took time to commend Edgar on his personal commitment to the resort and its people, during the past 15 years.

Edgar who has an 11 year old daughter with his life-partner, reports he is an avid walker, swimmer and reader, hobbies he likes to share with resort guests, who flock to his bar to be entertained by his stories while sipping his delicious drinks! □



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Prince is one of many associates at Bucuti & Tara Beach Resorts that make the boutique resort a special experience for its guests, and we wish to say thank you to Prince.





Baseball to expand blood testing for HGH



Dr. Mark Molitch of Northwestern University, who helped write medical standards meant to limit HGH treatment to legitimate patients, holds an injecter pen that contains approximately a weeks worth of doses for a patient in need of the drug at his clinic Thursday, Dec. 20, 2012, in Chicago.

Associated Press

BOB BAUM

AP Sports Writer

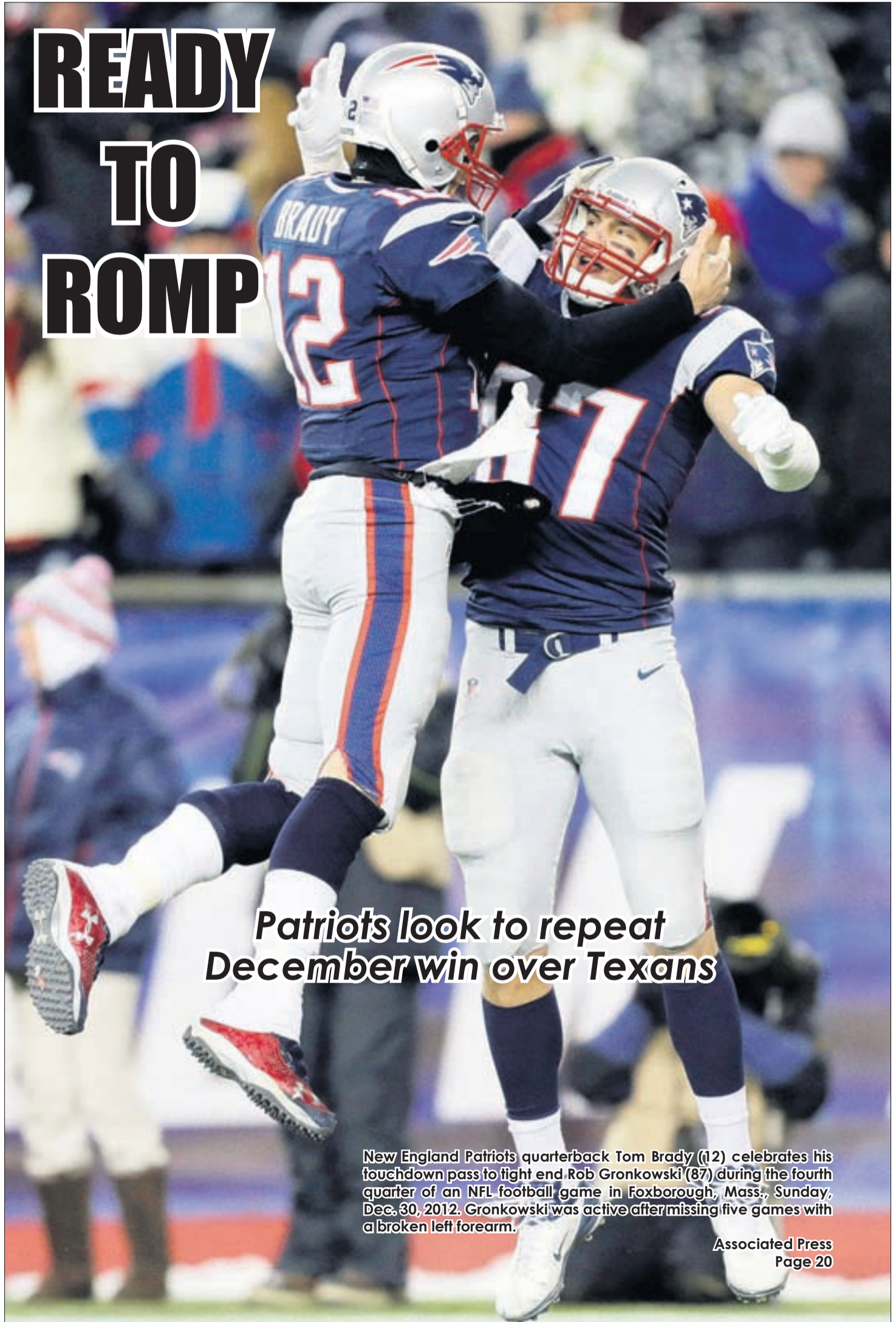
PARADISE VALLEY, Arizona (AP) — Major League Baseball will test for human growth hormone throughout the regular season and increase efforts to detect abnormal levels of testosterone.

Players were subject to blood testing for HGH during spring training last year, and Thursday's agreement between management and the players' association expands that throughout the season. Those are in addition to urine tests for other performance-enhancing drugs.

Under the changes to baseball's drug agreement, the World Anti-Doping Agency laboratory in Laval, Quebec, will keep records of each player, including his baseline ratio of testosterone to epitestosterone, and will conduct Carbon Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometry (IRMS) tests of any urine specimens that "vary materially."

Continued on Page 19

READY TO ROMP



Patriots look to repeat December win over Texans

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) celebrates his touchdown pass to tight end Rob Gronkowski (87) during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game in Foxborough, Mass., Sunday, Dec. 30, 2012. Gronkowski was active after missing five games with a broken left forearm.

Associated Press
Page 20

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NBA Capsules

Clippers beat Mavs 99-93 for 13th home win in row

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Chris Paul had 19 points and 16 assists, and the Los Angeles Clippers held on to beat the Dallas Mavericks 99-93 on Wednesday night, extending their franchise-record home winning streak to 13 games.

Matt Barnes added 19 points off the bench, and Blake Griffin had 15 points and 13 rebounds for the Clippers (29-8), who took sole possession of the NBA's best record from Oklahoma City with their third straight win overall.

Darren Collison scored 22 points for Dallas. O.J. Mayo added 17 and Dirk Nowitzki had 15. At 13-23, the Mavs fell 10 games below .500 for the first time since March 30, 2000, two months after Mark Cuban bought the team. They've lost four in a row overall and three straight on the road, where they are 5-16.

THUNDER 106, **TIMBERWOLVES** 84

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kevin Durant scored 26 points and Russell Westbrook added 23 to help Oklahoma City overpower outmanned Minnesota.

After losing its last game on a buzzer-beater against a last-place Washington team saddled by injuries to its three top players, Oklahoma City left nothing to chance with the Timberwolves missing All-Star forward Kevin Love and four others.

The Thunder stretched the lead to 24 before pulling

the starters with 5:44 to go. Alexey Shved scored 18 points for Minnesota, which announced earlier in the day that Love would miss eight to 10 weeks after

final attempt that would have tied the game. Clark missed a follow-up 3 off a long rebound.

Coming off a 125-112 loss at Houston on Tuesday, the



Los Angeles Clippers center DeAndre Jordan (6) shoots as Dallas Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki, of Germany, defends during the first half of their NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

breaking his right hand for the second time.

SPURS 108, **LAKERS** 105

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Tony Parker scored 24 points to help San Antonio hand slumping Los Angeles to its fifth straight loss.

Manu Ginobili added 19 points and Tiago Splitter and Stephen Jackson had 14 each for San Antonio, which has won 11 straight at home.

Kobe Bryant had 27 points, Metta World Peace added 23 and Earl Clark 22 for Los Angeles. Bryant was 10 for 24 from the field, missing a 3-pointer on his

Lakers fought until the final buzzer.

CELTICS 87, **SUNS** 79

BOSTON (AP) — Jeff Green scored 14 points, rookie Jared Sullinger added 12 points and 16 rebounds, and Boston recovered from a dreadful third quarter, rallying in the fourth to beat Phoenix.

The Celtics survived a scoring drought that spanned almost half of the third quarter, scoring just 14 in the period before regaining the lead and taking command against the road-weary Suns, who fell to 2-16 away from home

with their 11th straight road loss.

Jason Terry added 13 points as Boston's reserves outscored Phoenix's 47-16. Kevin Garnett was the only Boston starter to score in double figures, finishing with 10 points and five rebounds.

Jared Dudley scored 14 points and Marcin Gortat had 12 points and 14 rebounds for the Suns.

BUCKS 104, **BULLS** 96

CHICAGO (AP) — Brandon Jennings scored 20 of his 35 points in the third quarter and Milwaukee beat Chicago for its second consecutive victory under interim coach Jim Boylan.

Mike Dunleavy had 16 points and Monta Ellis finished with 14 for Milwaukee, which made 10 of 22 3-point attempts. Larry Sanders grabbed 12 rebounds and blocked seven shots.

Carlos Boozer had 22 points and 11 rebounds for the Bulls, who have dropped their last two games against Milwaukee at the United Center. The Bulls blew a 27-point lead in the third quarter as Milwaukee snapped a nine-game losing streak against Chicago with a 93-92 victory on Nov. 26.

Boozer has recorded a double-double in six consecutive games.

HORNETS 88, **ROCKETS** 79

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Roger Mason scored 15 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter to rally New Orleans to

a victory over Houston.

Greivis Vasquez and Jason Smith each scored 17 points for the Hornets, who have won three in a row for the first time this season. Robin Lopez added 14 points for New Orleans.

James Harden scored 25 points for the Rockets, who had won 10 of 12. Harden, who was held to three points in the final quarter when the Rockets were outscored 28-10, was the only Houston player in double figures.

Eric Gordon struggled with five points on 2-of-12 shooting for the Hornets.

GRIZZLIES 94, **WARRIORS** 87

OAKLAND, California (AP) — Zach Randolph had 19 points and 12 rebounds, Rudy Gay scored 18 points and Memphis completed a 3-0 road trip with a victory over Golden State.

Mike Conley added 16 points and Marc Gasol finished with 12 points and nine rebounds to help Memphis make its quick West Coast swing more memorable. The Grizzlies (23-10) also won at Phoenix on Sunday and at Sacramento on Monday.

Stephen Curry scored 24 points and Klay Thompson had 20 points, seven rebounds and seven assists as the Warriors (22-12) lost back-to-back games for only the second time this season.

The Warriors were coming off their most lopsided loss of the season, 115-89 to the Clippers. □

HGH

Continued from Page 17

"This is a proud and a great day for baseball," commissioner Bud Selig said following two days of owners' meetings.

"We'll continue to be a leader in this field and do what we have to do."

The announcement came one day after steroid-tainted stars Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens and Sammy Sosa failed to gain election to the Hall of Fame in their first year of eligibility.

Commenting on the timing, Selig noted the drug program changes had long been in the works "but it wasn't too bad, was it?" Selig reflected on how far baseball had come on performance enhancing drug issues.

"This is remarkable when you think of where we were 10, 12, 15 years ago and where we are today," he said. "Nobody could have dreamed it."

Baseball began random



At left, in a June 23, 2011 file photo, former San Francisco Giants baseball player Barry Bonds leaves federal court in San Francisco. At center, in a July 14, 2011 file photo, former Major League baseball pitcher Roger Clemens leaves federal court in Washington. At right in a May 13, 2009 file photo, former baseball player Sammy Sosa attends the People En Espanol "50 Most Beautiful" gala in New York.

Associated Press

drug testing in 2003, testing with penalties the following year and suspensions for first offenders in 2005.

Initial penalties were lengthened from 10 days to 50 games in 2006, when

illegal amphetamines were banned. The number of tests has gradually increased over the past decade.

Selig called the latest change a "yet an-

other indication how far this sport has come."

Rob Manfred, baseball's executive vice president for economics and league affairs, said each player will be tested at least once.

"Players want a program that is tough, scientifically accurate, backed by the latest proven scientific methods, and fair," union head Michael Weiner said in a statement. □

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NFL Preview

Patriots ready to repeat December romp over Texans

The Associated Press
The last time the Houston Texans went to Gillette Stadium they had the NFL's best record. They left with a 42-14 pounding from the New England Patriots.

Patriots coach Bill Belichick insists the rematch of that December game on Sunday in the NFL playoff divisional round will be different. Not too much different, of course, because he fully expects his Patriots to win and reach the AFC title match.

As for another 42-14 outcome, Belichick dismissed the thought.

"The plays will match up differently and I'm sure there will be new plays that weren't in that game," Belichick said. "I don't think you can overanalyze that game. It's a big picture thing."

The big picture is that the AFC East champion Patriots come off their playoff bye as 9½-point favorites against the AFC South winners. Houston beat Cincinnati 19-13 in the wild-card round last Saturday, not looking particularly overwhelming.

It's pretty simple what the Texans must do at the outset: Stay close. They fell behind so quickly on Dec. 10 that the outcome was decided after one quarter. "We know that our effort and how we performed last time wouldn't give us a chance against anybody on the road," coach Gary Kubiak said.

"It's about right now refocusing on all the things we have to do to go down there and have a chance to be successful."

A win for the Patriots would give Tom Brady his 17th in the playoffs and break a tie with Joe Montana for most in the postseason as a starting quarterback.

In the other AFC matchup, the Denver Broncos have a chance at home to send Ray Lewis into retirement on Saturday.

Lewis plans to end his 17-year career with the Baltimore Ravens when their season is over, and they



Houston Texans running back Arian Foster (23) celebrates his one-yard touchdown run against the Cincinnati Bengals during the third quarter of an NFL wild card playoff football game Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013, in Houston.

Associated Press

extended it with a 24-9 win over Indianapolis last week. They face the NFL's hottest team.

The Broncos are coming off a bye and riding an 11-game winning streak that includes a 34-17 win at Baltimore on Dec. 16.

The Ravens weren't at full strength last month. Last Sunday marked the first time all season that they had defensive playmakers Lewis, Ed Reed, Terrell Suggs and Haloti Ngata on the field together.

"It means nothing that we beat them in the regular season. I know we beat them pretty good, but in the playoffs it's just a different game," Broncos wide receiver Brandon Stokley said.

The Green Bay Packers have no fear about going on the road in the postseason, as they head to the San Francisco 49ers on Saturday. A similar crew to this year's group won three away games two years ago, then beat Pittsburgh in the Super Bowl.

The Packers have become healthier as the playoffs

approached. They have a decent running game to go with that deep receiving corps Aaron Rodgers throws to.

But Green Bay has two significant questions:

—Can the spotty offensive line neutralize one of the NFL's most dangerous pass rushes, something it couldn't do in the season-opener it lost to San Francisco?

—Can a defense that

has been gorged on the ground at times slow down the league's fourth-best rushing attack, led by Frank Gore?

The 49ers also have some uncertainties, notably how second-year quarterback Colin Kaepernick will handle the playoff pressure for the first time.

They do have a secondary that matches up well with Green Bay's receivers.

The Seattle Seahawks have

become the fashionable choice in these playoffs as the outsider who could emulate the Super Bowl-winning New York Giants of last season, the Packers of the previous year, and so on.

Their hosts on Sunday, the Atlanta Falcons, meanwhile, are under considerable pressure as the NFC's top-seeded squad for the second time in three years. They've yet to win a playoff game under the current trio of quarterback Matt Ryan, coach Mike Smith and general manager Thomas Dimitroff — losers in all three playoff appearances going back to the 2008 season, the last two not even close.

There's also the feeling that no team fears going into the Georgia Dome, and with the Seahawks having erased their road woes in the last month or so, including last week's 24-14 win over the Redskins in Washington, they are a formidable foe.

Still, the Falcons have the big, physical and versatile receivers to deal with Seattle's big, physical and versatile secondary.

"We've been disappointed a few times," said center Todd McClure, who's been with the Falcons for 13 years.

"I think we've got guys in this locker room who are hungry and ready to get over that hump." □

Jaguars fire Mularkey after team's worst season

MARK LONG
AP Sports Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Florida (AP) — The Jacksonville Jaguars fired coach Mike Mularkey Thursday after just one season, the worst in franchise history. New general manager David Caldwell made the announcement, giving him a clean slate heading into 2013. Caldwell said he made the move just 48 hours after he was hired because he wants to immediately explore every avenue possible to turn the Jaguars around. "For that to happen as seamlessly

as we want, and as quickly as our fans deserve, I feel it is in everyone's best interests for an immediate and clean restart," Caldwell said. Mularkey, who went 2-14 this season, looked like he would be one and done when owner Shad Khan parted ways with general manager Gene Smith last week. Even though Khan ultimately hired Mularkey, Smith directed the coaching search last January that started and ended with the former Atlanta Falcons offensive coordinator.

"Mike Mularkey is leaving

our organization with my utmost respect," Khan said. "Mike gave the Jaguars everything he had on and off the field, and his efforts as our head coach will always be appreciated."

Mularkey's brief tenure — he didn't even last a year — was filled with mistakes. His biggest one may have been his loyalty to Smith, who assembled a roster that lacked talent on both sides of the ball. Mularkey probably stuck with Smith's franchise quarterback, Blaine Gabbert, longer than he should have. □

NFL great Junior Seau had brain disease CTE

BARRY WILNER
AP Pro Football Writer

Junior Seau, one of the NFL's best and fiercest players for nearly two decades, had a degenerative brain disease when he committed suicide last May, the National Institutes of Health told The Associated Press on Thursday. Results of an NIH study of Seau's brain revealed abnormalities consistent with chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

The NIH, based in Bethesda, Maryland, conducted a study of three unidentified brains, one of which was Seau's. It said the findings on Seau were similar to autopsies of people "with exposure to repetitive head injuries."

Seau's family requested the analysis of his brain.

Seau was a star linebacker for 20 NFL seasons with San Diego, Miami and New England before retiring in 2009. He died of a self-inflicted shotgun wound.

He joins a list of several dozen American football players who had CTE. Boston University's center for study of the disease reported last month that 34 former pro players and nine who played only college football suffered from CTE.

"I was not surprised after learning a little about CTE that he had it," Seau's 23-year-old son, Tyler, said. "He did play so many years at that level. I was more just kind of angry I didn't do something more and have the awareness to help him more, and now it is too late."

"I don't think any of us were aware of the side effects that could be going on with head trauma until he passed away. We didn't know his behavior was from head trauma."

That behavior, according to Tyler Seau and Junior's ex-wife Gina, included wild mood swings, irrationality, forgetfulness, insomnia and depression.

"He emotionally detached himself and would kind of 'go away' for a little bit," Tyler Seau said. "And then the depression and things like that. It started to pro-



In this Jan. 10, 2010, file photo, New England Patriots linebacker Junior Seau (55) warms up on the field before an NFL wild-card playoff football game in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press

gressively get worse." He hid it well in public, they said. But not when he was with family or close friends. "We appreciate the Seau family's cooperation with the National Institutes of Health," the league said in an email statement to the AP. "The finding underscores the recognized need for additional research to accelerate a fuller understanding of CTE. "The NFL, both directly and in partnership with the NIH, Centers for Disease Control and other leading organizations, is committed to supporting a wide range of independent medical and scientific research that will both address CTE and promote the long-term health and safety of athletes at all levels."

NFL teams have given a \$30 million research grant to the NIH.

The NFL faces lawsuits by thousands of former players who say the league withheld information on the harmful effects of concussions. According to an AP review of 175 lawsuits, 3,818 players have filed suit. At least 26 Pro Football Hall of Fame members are among the players who have done so.

Seau is not the first former NFL player who killed himself, then was found to have CTE. Dave Duerson and Ray Easterling are others.

Duerson, a former Chicago Bears defensive back, left a note asking for his brain to be studied for signs of trauma before shooting himself. His family filed a wrongful death suit against the NFL, claiming the league didn't do enough to prevent or treat the concussions that severely damaged his

brain. Easterling played safety for the Atlanta Falcons in the 1970s. After his career, he suffered from dementia, depression and insomnia, according to his wife, Mary Ann. He committed suicide last April.

Mary Ann Easterling is among the plaintiffs who have sued the NFL.

"It was important to us to get to the bottom of this,

the truth," Gina Seau said, "and now that it has been conclusively determined from every expert that he had obviously had it, CTE, we just hope it is taken more seriously."

"You can't deny it exists, and it is hard to deny there is a link between head trauma and CTE. There's such strong evidence correlating head trauma and collisions and CTE." □

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FDA requires sleeping drug dosage cuts

SABRINA TAVERNISE

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WASHINGTON – The Food and Drug Administration announced Thursday that it is requiring manufacturers of popular pills like Ambien and Zolpimist that help millions of Americans sleep at night to cut the recommended dosage in half for women after laboratory studies showed that the medicine can leave patients drowsy in the morning and at risk for car accidents.

The new requirement applies to drugs containing the active ingredient zolpidem, by far the most widely used sleep aid. Using lower doses means less of the drug will remain in the blood in the morning hours and will reduce the risk that people who use the drug will be impaired while driving. The agency told manufacturers that the recommended dosage for women, who eliminate zolpidem from their bodies more slowly than men, should be lowered to 5 milligrams from 10 milligrams for immediate-release products like Ambien, Edluar and Zolpimist. Dosages for extended-release products should be lowered to 6.25 milligrams from 12.5, the agency said. For men, the agency informed manufacturers that labels should recommend that health care providers should “consider” prescribing lower doses.

An estimated 10 to 15 percent of women will have a level of zolpidem in their blood that could impair driving eight hours after taking the pill, while only about 3 percent of men do, said Dr. Robert Temple, deputy director for clinical science in the FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. Patients taking the higher doses should continue them for the time being, agency officials said, but should consult with their doctors about altering the dose. □

Flu widespread but not yet seen at epidemic rate

D. G. McNEIL Jr.

K. Q. SEELYE

© 2013 New York Times

It is not your imagination – more people you know are sick this winter, even people who have had flu shots. The country is in the grip of three emerging flu or flulike epidemics: an early start to the annual flu season with an unusually aggressive virus; a surge in a new type of norovirus; and the worst whooping cough outbreak in 60 years – all against the backdrop of the normal winter highs for the many viruses that cause symptoms on the “colds and flu” spectrum.

Influenza is widespread and causing local crises. On Wednesday, Boston’s mayor declared a public health emergency as cases flooded hospital emergency rooms.

Google’s national flu trend maps, which track flu-related searches, are almost solid red (for “intense activity”), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s weekly FluView maps, which track confirmed cases, are nearly solid brown (for “widespread activity”).

“Yesterday, I saw a construction worker, a big strong guy in his Carhartts who looked like he could fall off a roof without noticing it,” said Dr. Beth Zeeman, an emergency room doctor for MetroWest Medical Center in Framingham, just outside Boston.

“He was in a fetal position with fever and chills, like a wet rag. When I see one of

those cases, I just tighten up my mask a little.”

Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston started asking visitors with even mild cold symptoms to wear masks and to avoid maternity wards. The hospital has treated 532 confirmed influenza patients this season and admitted 167, even more than it did

who saw both the swine flu and SARS outbreaks. Adding to the problem, she said, many staff members were at home sick, and supplies like flu test swabs were running out.

Nationally, deaths and hospitalizations are still below epidemic thresholds. But experts do not expect that to remain true. Pneumonia

was overwhelmingly H3N2. No cases have been resistant to Tamiflu, which can ease symptoms if taken within 48 hours, and this year’s flu shot is well-matched to the H3N2 strain, the CDC said. Flu shots are imperfect, especially in the elderly, whose immune systems may not be strong enough to produce enough antibodies. Simultaneously, the country is seeing a large and early outbreak of norovirus, the “cruise ship flu” or “stomach flu,” said Dr. Aron J. Hall of the CDC’s viral gastroenterology branch. It includes a new strain, which first appeared in Australia and is known as the Sydney 2012 variant.

This week, Maine’s health department said that state was seeing a large spike in cases.

Cities across Canada reported norovirus outbreaks so serious that hospitals were shutting down whole wards for disinfection because patients were being infected after moving into the rooms of those who had just recovered.

The classic symptoms of norovirus are “explosive” diarrhea and “projectile” vomiting, which can send infectious particles flying yards away.

“I also saw a woman I’m sure had norovirus,” Zeeman said. “She said she’d gone to the bathroom 14 times at home and four times since she came into the ER. You can get dehydrated really quickly that way.” □



Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, center, and Dr. Barbara Ferrer, executive director of the Boston Public Health Commission, speak to reporters after the spread of influenza caused the mayor to declare a public health emergency, at the Parkman House on Beacon Hill, Boston.

(Rick Friedman/The New York Times)

by this date during the 2009-10 swine flu pandemic.

At Brigham and Women’s Hospital, 100 patients were crowded into spaces licensed for 53. Beds lined halls and pressed against vending machines. Overflow patients sat on benches in the lobby wearing surgical masks.

“Today was the first time I think I was experiencing my first pandemic,” said Heidi Crim, the nursing director,

usually shows up in national statistics only a week or two after emergency rooms report surges in cases, and deaths start rising a week or two after that, said Dr. Gregory A. Poland, a vaccine specialist at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

The predominant flu strain circulating is an H3N2, which typically kills more people than the H1N1 strains that usually predominate; the relatively lethal 2003-4 “Fujian flu” season

US panel backs diabetes pill from J&J

WASHINGTON (AP) — A panel of U.S. health experts ruled Thursday that an experimental diabetes drug from Johnson & Johnson is safe and effective, though lingering safety questions must be tracked over the long term. The Food and Drug Administration’s panel of diabetes experts voted 10-5 in favor of J&J’s canagliflozin to treat Type 2 diabetes. The drug is part of a new class of medications that work by increasing the levels of blood sugar excreted via urine.

Panelists said the drug could be useful in combination with existing diabetes medications. However, they raised concerns about low levels of

heart attack, stroke and urinary tract infections seen in the first year of testing. The experts said those infections could be especially harmful to patients with kidney damage, a common side effect of diabetes.

Almost all panelists recommended that the company be required to track those problems over the long term to tell whether they get worse.

“There are definitely benefits to this drug, there are also risks,” said Dr. Abraham Thomas of the Henry Ford Hospital. “I still have concerns, as many other do.”

In recent years, the FDA has required companies developing diabetes

drugs to track cardiac side effects in patient testing.

That’s because diabetes medicines are taken daily for many years, and one former blockbuster, Avandia, was linked to higher heart attack risks. In 2010, the FDA restricted Avandia’s use to patients not helped by any other diabetes treatments, and European regulators barred all sales of Avandia.

J&J is studying canagliflozin in nine studies enrolling more than 10,000 patients.

It notes this is the largest research effort of its kind submitted to FDA for a diabetes drug. □

Carmakers let app developers drive innovation

RYAN NAKASHIMA

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) —

Googling the nearest gas station, sending email from your smartphone, or booking a table at a restaurant: Those are all things you shouldn't do while driving. But so many drivers have grown accustomed to their on-the-go tasks that automakers are increasingly trying to make those things easier to pull off with both hands on the wheel and both eyes on the road.

As General Motors and Ford commissioned ideas from app makers this week, the possibilities for what you can do with your vehicle's steering wheel buttons, microphone, speakers and internal gauges are quickly expanding.

How would you like to choose your favorite tune by simply uttering the song's title, turn your car into a mobile Wi-Fi hotspot, or respond to an ad you hear on the radio without lifting a finger?

At the International CES show, General Motors and Ford launched programs that will open their designs to developers, inviting them to create software applications for future car models. It's a relatively new strategy for car makers, but one that many gadget manufacturers employ, including Apple, which did it for the original iPhone in 2007.

The programs free the automakers from having to keep pace with new technologies by tying the functionality of their cars' internal systems to advances in smartphones.

Ford Motor Co.'s app developer program, called Sync AppLink, "is a way for (the company) not to worry about the next big app," said product manager Julius Marchwicki.

General Motors Co. said its framework "gives developers a whole new sandbox, with wheels."

In some ways, though, the current systems inside cars have a long ways to go to provide the functionality that smartphones have offered for years.

For instance, in a demo of Ford's new integration with music service Rhapsody, you can wirelessly sync your phone with the car and listen to playlists you have already created by pressing the voice button on the steering wheel and saying "play playlist 1."

But you can't just choose a track by voice on a whim, which is part of what makes these unlimited streaming plans attractive even at \$10 a month.

Saying "Bruno Mars" to your Ford car won't pull up "Locked Out of Heaven," although typing it on Rhapsody's website or smartphone app can. The same is true of Pandora's radio app in Ford cars.

The company plans to improve the car's ability to respond to voice commands that cover a wider range of search terms and speech in Applink 2.0, which is expected out by September of this year, said C.J. King, development engineer for Applink. General Motors showed off its new relationship with Apple's Siri voice assistant, which is newly integrated in some of its cars including the Chevy Spark. Siri, however, only linked up to the car's speaker and microphone and didn't offer access to the car's inner systems.

Rhapsody CEO Jon Irwin said that it's really just the beginning for automakers to work more closely with high-tech content providers.

"This is the first step in what's going to be a really exciting year," Irwin said. "As that technology evolves, you'll see it get better and better."

When it comes to integrating new driver-friendly advancements, American automakers are playing catch-up to their Asian counterparts.

Hyundai's Blue Link technology syncs with iPhones and Android devices already and allows users to check their car's maintenance data like tire pressure, fluids and the condition of airbags on their mobile devices. The service debuted in 2011 on its So-

nata and is expanding to a wider range of vehicles. Voice-activated control of third-party music apps isn't integrated yet, but the company is exploring using Google's Android software to do so. Toyota's use of voice is the most advanced of the auto providers, even though it had nothing new to show at this year's CES. When it upgraded its Entune service for Toyota cars and Enform for its Lexus line at CES last year, drivers got the ability to use their voice to control several key apps, allowing them to say, for example, "Adele" to the iHeart Radio or Pandora app to create a custom station with tracks from the British singer and others who sound similar. Voice commands also worked to buy movie tickets, make restaurant reservations through the



An industry affiliate tests out Ford's SYNC connection and entertainment system inside a Ford Fusion at the Consumer Electronics Show, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013, in Las Vegas. Ford's SYNC connects the car stereo and navigation system to a user's mobile device. Associated Press

OpenTable app and get turn-by-turn navigation towards cheap gas.

Both Toyota's and Hyundai's systems require yearly subscription fees after free trial periods.

On Chrysler's Ram 1500 truck introduced at the

gadget show this year, iHeart Radio was added as an application. Users who link their smartphones to the car can select from customized stations they've made already but aren't able to create new ones by voice. □



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Ford's souped-up dividend could lure new investors

PAUL HARLOFF
AP Business Writer

Ford may get a longer look from curious investors after rolling out a more muscular, souped-up dividend on Thursday.

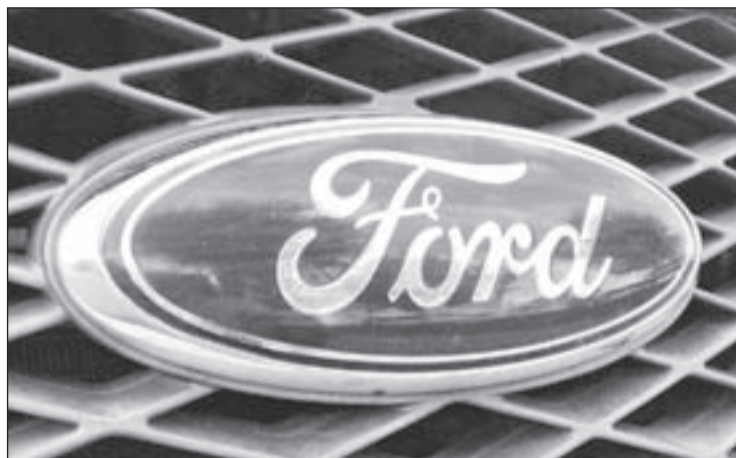
The No. 2 U.S. automaker is doubling its quarterly payout to 10 cents, just nine months after paying its first dividend in more than five years. The dividend increase marks another milestone in Ford's comeback. It has strengthened its image with customers along with its balance sheet. Ford is expected to report its fourth consecutive annual profit when it releases earnings in a few weeks. In 2011, the company posted its largest profit since 1998.

Analysts who cover Ford Motor Co. quickly raised their expectations for the stock, saying the higher dividend could make it more attractive to investors. Ford shares rose 2.7 percent to \$13.83 Thursday, their highest closing price since July 2011.

Ford's dividend yield, a measure of how much a company pays out relative to its stock price, will rise to 2.9 percent, which is higher than the average 2.2 percent among companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index. Michael Rawson, a financial analyst at Morningstar, said that could entice income fund managers, who look to generate dividend income for their clients. Individual investors, unhappy with the cur-

rent low rates on Treasuries and certificates of deposit, might also take Ford for a spin. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note was 1.9 percent Thursday.

Because of historically low interest rates and tepid economic growth, investors are shopping around



for reliable dividend income. "Investors have increasingly put their money into "higher yielding but slower growing companies that offer a compelling dividend yield relative to bond rates," Rawson said.

Ford, based in Dearborn, Michigan, halted dividend payments in September 2006. The company lost \$12.6 billion that year.

Since then Ford shed brands such as Volvo and Mercury, closed factories, cut staff and struck a new contract with union workers that lowers labor costs. It has also earned praise and new customers for products like the Ford Explorer SUV. And after losing money during the recession and financial crisis, the

company has steadily improved profit margins and rebuilt its stockpile of cash.

As a result, Ford won back an investment grade rating on its debt last spring. That did two key things: the ratings change lowered the company's borrowing costs and allowed it to re-

claim its blue logo and other assets, which were used as collateral for a \$25 billion, company-saving loan in 2006.

A few issues continue to hold back Ford — and its stock price.

Ford has said it expects to lose \$1.5 billion both this year and next in Europe, where plunging sales have forced it to close plants and lay off thousands of workers. The company announced a multi-year restructuring of its European operations earlier this fall.

Analyst Peter Nesvold of Jefferies said the decision to return more cash to shareholders indicates Ford executives believe they've correctly gauged the amount of cash needed to

fix things in Europe. Ford's total annual dividend will rise to around \$1.6 billion.

Nesvold raised his price target for Ford shares to \$16. But there are other problems. Ford lost market share in the U.S. last year. Some sales went to its Japanese competitors, who recovered from the 2011 earthquake. But sales of the new Ford Escape and Fusion, two of the company's most important products, also slumped after multiple recalls for safety problems. Ford has fixed those issues and expects market share to go up this year as new products go on sale.

The company is also facing a leadership transition soon. Chief Executive Alan Mulally is stepping back from day-to-day operations and handing the reins to longtime Ford executive Mark Fields, who became the company's chief operating officer in December. Although Mulally has said he will stay through 2014, some investors fear Ford will return to bad habits when Mulally is no longer overseeing things.

Finally, as an industrial company, Ford is more exposed to the economic cycle than, say, a utility company, which tends to have more consistent earnings and higher dividend yields. Standard & Poor's said there were 1,262 dividend increases in the fourth quarter of last year, nearly double the total from the last quarter of 2011. □



Burger King in China to serve Pepsi, not Coke

NEW YORK (AP) — Diners who go to a Burger King in China can now expect to be served Pepsi, rather than the Coke they get at the fast-food chain in the United States.

PepsiCo Inc. says it struck a deal to serve its drinks at Burger King in China for the first time, taking over a deal the chain had with the Coca-Cola Co. Although Burger King is the world's second largest hamburger chain, it has fewer than 100 locations in China. But the Miami-based company has said it plans to expand significantly in China over the next several years through a joint venture with a franchise operator.

Fountain soda accounts for about a quarter of soft drink sales volume in China, according to the market researcher Euromonitor International. Globally, Coca-Cola, based in Atlanta, still has a far larger share of the broader soft drink market than PepsiCo.

PepsiCo, based in Purchase, New York, recently moved to broaden its distribution in the fast-growing China market by swapping its holdings in its bottling operations there for a stake in Tingyi, a Chinese beverage maker. □

American Express plans to cut 5,400 jobs

ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — American Express Co. said Thursday that it will slash roughly 5,400 jobs, mainly in its travel business, as it seeks to cut costs and transform its operations as more of its customers shift to online portals for booking travel plans and other needs.

The job cuts will be partly offset by jobs that the company expects to add this year, however.

All told, American Express anticipates that staffing levels will end up being between 4 percent and 6 percent lower this year than in 2012. The company currently has 63,500 employees. "Against the backdrop of an uneven

economic recovery, these restructuring initiatives are designed to make American Express more nimble, more efficient and more effective in using our resources to drive growth," CEO Kenneth Chenault.

Shares slipped 14 cents to \$60.65 in after-hours trading. Shares ended regular trading up 53 cents at \$60.79. American Express said it will book an after-tax charge of \$287 million due to the restructuring.

It's also recording \$212 million in expenses related to reward points for its cardholders and roughly \$95 million in customer reimbursements and other costs.

The combined charges will reduce American Express' fourth-quarter net

income by 46 percent from a year earlier.

The company projects net income of \$637 million, or 56 cents per share, compared with net income of \$1.2 billion, or \$1.01 per share, in the same quarter of 2011.

Excluding one-time items, fourth-quarter 2012 earnings amount to \$1.2 billion, or \$1.09 per share, ahead of analysts' consensus forecast of \$1.06 per share, according to FactSet.

Revenue rose 5 percent to \$8.1 billion. Analysts expected \$8.01 billion. Management said spending by cardholders increased 8 percent during the quarter, despite some softening early in the quarter due to Superstorm Sandy. □



Stocks gain, pushing S&P back above five-year high

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Standard and Poor's 500 closed at another five-year high Thursday after the stock market got a boost from reports suggesting the outlook for economic growth may be improving. The S&P 500 rose 11.10 points, or 0.7 percent, to 1,472.12, its highest close since December 2007, when the U.S. economy was entering the Great Recession. It also closed at a five-year high on Friday and is now 93 points off its record close of 1,565.15, logged in October 2007. The Dow Jones industrial average closed up 80.71 points, or 0.6 percent, at 13,471.22. The Nasdaq composite rose 15.95 points, or 0.5 percent, to 3,121.76.

European Central Bank President Mario Draghi said the struggling euro zone should start growing again later this year, but he warned that the region has yet to reach a turning point in its struggle with recession and handling its government debt load. The comments bolstered expectations that the worst of the region's crisis may be behind it. Investors were also cheered by a report that showed China may gradually be emerging from its worst economic downturn since the 2008 global crisis. Export growth for

the world's second-largest economy rebounded strongly in December. Stocks finished the day higher despite a U.S. government report that weekly applications for unemployment benefits ticked up last week. The Labor Department said applications rose 4,000 to 371,000, the most in five weeks. The previous week's total was revised lower. Ford was among the gainers, rising 36 cents, or 2.7 percent, to \$13.83 after the company doubled its quarterly dividend to 10 cents, just nine months after paying its first dividend in more than five years.

U.S. companies are sitting on record cash piles, having rebuilt their balance sheets following the financial crisis that started five years ago. Analysts

at Deutsche Bank predict that corporations will stop adding to those cash piles this year and instead start returning more cash to



Trader John Panin, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013. Stocks closed higher on Wall Street Thursday, gaining for a second day, after the European Central Bank chief said the region was poised to start growing again, bolstering expectations that the worst of the region's crisis is behind it.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

shareholders, helping push the S&P 500 up to 1,575 by the end of the year. That

would be a 10 percent increase from where it ended 2012. Traders are also waiting for more indications on the health of U.S.

companies from earnings reports. A good start this week to

the earning reports for the fourth quarter of last year helped the market Wednesday after aluminum company Alcoa predicted rising demand for aluminum this year. Investors will be paying particular attention to the outlook for company sales during this reporting period, said Quincy Krosby, a market strategist at Prudential Financial. Revenue growth slowed to 0.4 percent in the third quarter of 2012, compared to growth of 11.4 percent in the same period in 2011, according to S&P Capital IQ data.

"The third-quarter earnings season top-line revenue growth pulled back," said Krosby. "That's of concern because, when all is said and done, markets are supposed to be a reflection of company earnings." □

General Motors to open tech center in US

PHILLIP LUCAS
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — General Motors says a new information technology center in suburban Atlanta — the third of four planned by the largest U.S. automaker — will open in March and create 1,000 white-collar jobs as part of its new focus on producing software and other applications in-house.

The automaker announced Thursday that it is

hiring software developers, project managers, database experts, business analysts and other information technology professionals to staff its Information Technology Innovation Center in Roswell — about 10 miles (16 kilometers) north of Atlanta.

State officials say the company has invested \$26 million in the development and are calling it another step toward establishing the area as a hub for tech-

nological innovation. General Motors Vice President and Chief Information Officer Randy Mott said Thursday that the company has relied on outside firms for tech products and applications for about 30 years. The 228,000 square-foot (21,181 sq. meter) Roswell facility — along with centers in Warren, Michigan; Austin, Texas; and a to-be-named fourth location — will be part of GM's effort to hire up to 10,000

technology professionals over a three- to five-year period to move production in-house instead of buying from outside companies.

"We feel like based on what we're trying to do, which is provide capability for our business, it's much better to have people that understand not only technology but General Motors and the General Motors business," Mott said after a news conference at Georgia Tech. □

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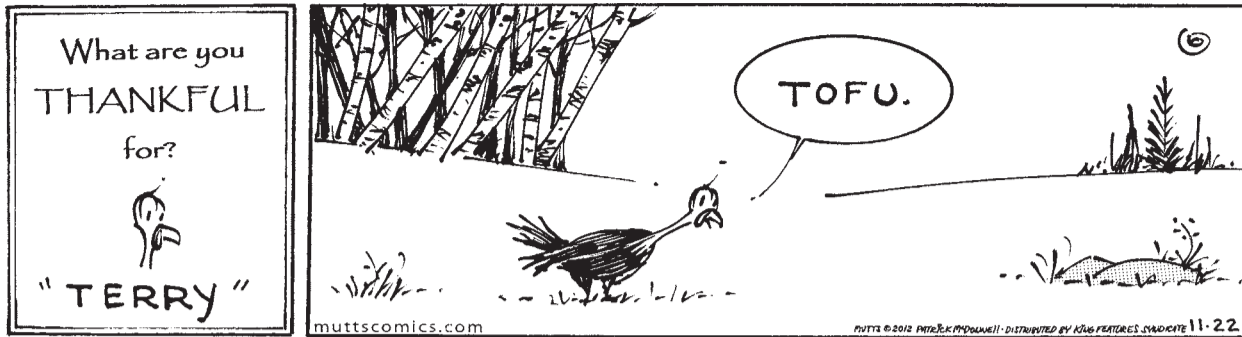
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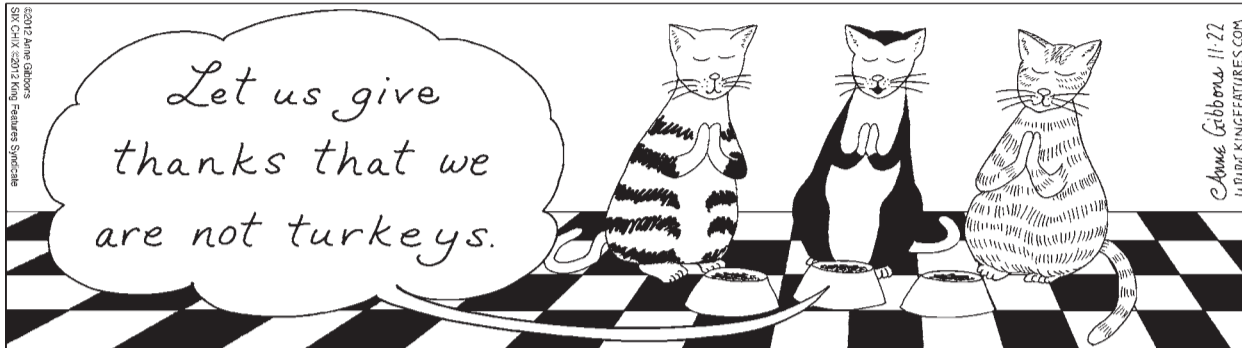


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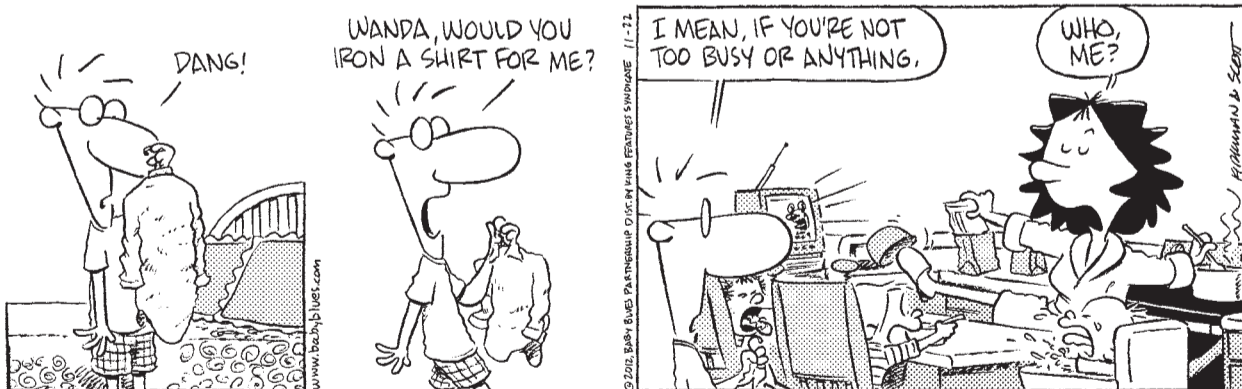
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

1								
		7	3					5
	6			1	2			
	4	5	6			8		
5			8				4	
2		1		9	5			
	7	8			1			
4			5	7				
							2	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/22

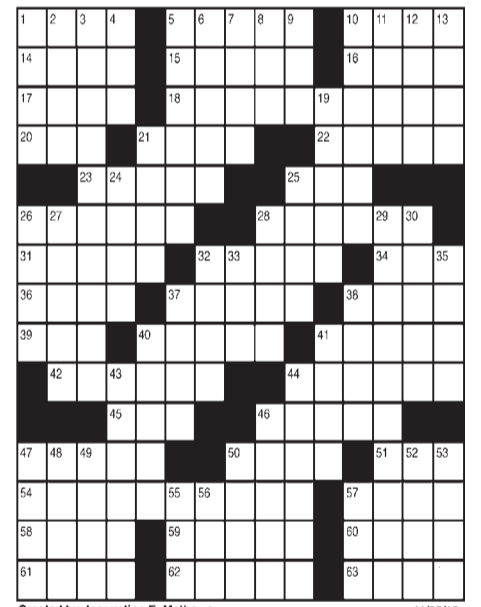
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

8	7	5	9	3	4	2	6	1
3	1	6	8	5	2	9	7	4
9	2	4	1	6	7	8	3	5
7	4	9	2	8	6	1	5	3
5	3	1	7	4	9	6	2	8
6	8	2	3	1	5	4	9	7
2	5	3	4	9	1	7	8	6
1	6	7	5	2	8	3	4	9
4	9	8	6	7	3	5	1	2

ACROSS

- 1 Late actor Foxx
- 5 Shish ___; BBQ favorite
- 10 Unpleasant
- 14 Trip ___; stumble on
- 15 Pure virgin ___ oil
- 16 Zero
- 17 5,280 feet
- 18 Accusation; charge
- 20 Cotton gin man ___ Whitney
- 21 Escape
- 22 Desires
- 23 Actor ___ Keith
- 25 PC alternative
- 26 Primps
- 28 Tortoise, e.g.
- 31 Rowed
- 32 Baton ___ LA
- 34 Tax-deferred acct.
- 36 Skating rink
- 37 Belgrade residents
- 38 Air pollution
- 39 Allow
- 40 Loses color
- 41 Clamor
- 42 Becomes educated
- 44 Cheered
- 45 ___ breath; halitosis
- 46 Steam bath
- 47 Temple leader
- 50 Saint Paul's state; abbr.
- 51 Late Senator Kennedy
- 54 Beside the point
- 57 Sly
- 58 Peggy and Gypsy Rose
- 59 Window sill, for one
- 60 Stockings
- 61 Regulations
- 62 Spirited horse
- 63 Singles
- DOWN
- 1 Italy's capital
- 2 Corrupt



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 11/22/12

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

3	Done on purpose	DEPT	GLAD	SCAB
4	Dr. ___ of rap	AWARE	RICE	HALL
5	Cuddly looking marsupials	RECUR	EVEN	RUDE
6	Actress Burstyn	ESTIMATE	THESES	
7	Liver secretion	SAGA	RAIDERS	
8	"___ Maria"	ALUMNA	FILED	
9	Plead	RAT	SIDED	SEATS
10	Still whole	EDAM	NAMED	DIRE
11	Nickel or dime	ASHES	LURES	DEC
12	Shoelace problem	LONER	BASSET	
13	Strong desires	REPLIES	GIVE	
19	In the know	ORIOLE	UNTANGLE	
21	Locate	ANEW	DANA	GOOEY
24	Film holder	DICE	EDIT	ERASE
25	Big coffee cups	SEED	DOTS	SALTS

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- 38 In just a bit
- 40 Weak
- 41 Part of speech
- 43 Mother Superior
- 44 Harangued
- 46 Burn the edges of
- 47 Small brook
- 48 Vicinity
- 49 Make tea
- 50 Manufactured
- 52 Above all ___; primarily
- 53 Recolors
- 55 Rail systems
- 56 Animal doc
- 57 Which person?

Colleges expect lower enrollment

ANDREW MARTIN

© 2013 New York Times

An annual survey of colleges and universities found that a growing number of schools face declining enrollment and less revenue from tuition.

The survey, released by the credit ratings agency Moody's Investors Service on Thursday, found that nearly half of colleges and universities that responded expect enrollment declines for full-time students, and a third of the schools expect tuition revenue to decline or to grow at less than the rate of inflation.

Moody's analysts say the problems are particularly acute at smaller, tuition-dependent schools and lower-rated universities, which have less ability to raise prices or attract students.

"The cumulative effects of years of depressed family income and net worth, as well as uncertain job prospects for many recent graduates, are combining to soften student market demand at current tuition prices," said Emily Schwarz, a Moody's analyst and lead author of the report, in a statement.

The growing financial challenges for colleges and universities come as students and graduates have amassed more than \$1 trillion in student debt, and many are struggling to pay their bills. Nearly 1 in 6 people with an outstanding student loan balance is in

default, the federal government says.

Before the financial crisis of 2008, colleges and universities routinely raised tuition with little effect on the number of prospective students who applied. Some private colleges said that applications actually increased when they bolstered prices, apparently because families equated higher prices with quality.

But that attitude has changed, in part because families' income has declined. Schwarz also noted, "Tougher governmental scrutiny of higher education costs and disclosure practices is adding regulatory and political pressure to tuition and revenue from rising at past rates."

In addition, she noted that budget negotiations in Congress could lead to cuts in student aid programs, even as the share of students who depend on government help continues to rise. At public universities, federal loans finance a median of 40 percent of student charges; at private schools, the median is 21 percent.

Overall, 18 percent of private universities and 15 percent of public schools that responded to the survey projected a decline in net tuition revenue for fiscal 2013. A much larger share, about one-third, said net tuition revenue would either decline or grow by less than 2 percent.

"Such weak revenue growth often means a college cannot afford salary increases or new program investments unless it cuts spending on staff and existing programs," the Moody's report said. By comparison, in fiscal 2008, only 11 percent of private schools and 9 percent of public schools failed to raise tuition revenue by 2 percent or more.

Growing awareness of student debt has focused increased attention on the value and cost of higher education, which has risen faster than inflation for decades as a result of increased spending on administrators, financial aid and debt for new buildings, and higher costs for items that have affected all businesses, like health care. □

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Indian park battles poachers targeting rhino horn

DENIS D. GRAY
Associated Press

KAZIRANGA, India (AP)

— Out of the early morning mists and tall grass of northeast India emerges a massive creature with a dinosaur-like face, having survived millions of years despite a curse — literally on its head. As elephant-borne riders approach, the formidable hulk sniffs the air for danger, then resumes its breakfast. This is Kaziranga, refuge to more than 2,200 endangered Indian rhinoceros and one of the world's best-protected wildlife reserves. But even here, where rangers follow shoot-to-kill orders, poachers are laying siege to "Fortress Kaziranga," attempting to shear off the animals' horns to supply a surge in demand for purported medicine in China that's pricier than gold. At least 18 rhino fell to poachers in and around the park in 2012, compared to 10 in all of India in 2011.

Insurgents eager to bolster their war chests here in India's Assam state are also involved, according to police. Authorities are investigating a recent news report that a Chinese company offered two rebel groups a deal: weapons in exchange for horns and body parts of the one-horned species whose scientific name is rhinoceros unicornis.

Pitted against the poachers, some armed with battlefield rifles, are 152 anti-poaching camps staffed by more than 900 rangers, guards and other personnel — almost one for every square kilometer of the reserve. These include a well-armed task force rushed in when the poach-



In this Monday, Dec. 3, 2012 photo, one-horned rhinoceroses graze inside the Kaziranga National Park, a wildlife reserve that provides refuge to more than 2,200 endangered Indian one-horned rhinoceros, in the northeastern Indian state of Assam.

Associated Press

ing erupted again early last year. Kaziranga also is ready to deploy drones and satellite surveillance to track the intruders.

The rhino war is a bloody one on all counts. A number of guards have been killed along with 108 poachers since 1985 while 507 rhino have perished by gunfire, electrocution or spiked pits set by the poachers, according to the park. More than 50 poachers were arrested last year.

"It's highly organized crime where someone comes to buy, somebody supplies the arms, someone comes as a shooter and local field men help them," says veteran park chief N.K. Vasu, as a nighttime operation that nets one poacher gets under way. "If mobilization had not occurred there would have been widespread killings."

Reflecting the globaliza-



In this Monday, Dec. 3, 2012 photo, a one-horned rhinoceros grazes inside the Kaziranga National Park, a wildlife reserve that provides refuge to more than 2,200 endangered Indian one-horned rhinoceros, in the northeastern Indian state of Assam.

Associated Press

tion of wildlife trafficking, the accelerating slaughter for China's market occurs wherever one of the world's oldest and largest mammals are found, especially in southern Africa. In South Africa alone, more than 630 rhinos fell to poachers last year, up from 13 in 2007, according to the country's Department of Environmental Affairs.

Driving the killings are soaring prices that China's growing, moneyed class are willing to pay — up to \$65,000 per kilogram (\$30,000 per pound). This has even forced museums in Europe where thefts have occurred to replace real rhino horns with fakes.

Behind it is a deeply rooted belief among many Chinese that rhino horn — basically compressed hair — can cure everything from rheumatism to cancer, despite admonitions by most medical experts that it has "about as much medicinal value as chewing one's fingernails." To date, experts say Asian countries have proved better at protecting their rhinos than Africa, where most of the China-bound horns originate before being smuggled mainly through Southeast Asia by air, land and sea. "The bosses of criminal syndicates which control the trafficking go where the cost of business is very low,

and that's now in Africa," says Christy Williams of the World Wide Fund for Nature. "If Africa starts to really crack down, then they'll be moving back to Asia. People are always ready to poach rhino. They are only waiting for an opportunity, for the protection to go down." Kaziranga park statistics since 1980 reflect this ebb and flow, stemming from both demand and the level of protection afforded. The 1990s saw intensive poaching with a high of 48 rhinos killed in 1992. It subsided after 1998 but shot up again this year.

Williams, who is based in Nepal, says Asian smuggling routes run from India through Nepal to Tibet and into other regions of China or through northern Myanmar to China. "Beyond, when it heads into Tibet, it's a black hole," he says.

China has in the past supported an array of insurgent groups in Assam and other areas of India's northeast that have sought independence from India, and growing economic and transport links are facilitating wildlife trafficking.

Last month, Seven Sisters Post, an English-language newspaper in Assam, reported that the United Liberation Front of Assam and another rebel group have been approached several times by the Longhui Pharmaceutical Company, a subsidiary of arms manufacturer Hawk Group, to supply rhino parts in exchange for weapons, something the groups claim they rejected. The web site of Longhui, based in Hainan province, says the company produces rhino horn medicine through "shaving alive rhino horn technology."

J.N. Choudhury, Assam's police chief, declined to comment on the report, which the government is investigating, but said members of the Karbi Longri NC Liberation Front have been arrested in recent weeks on charges of rhino poaching in and around Kaziranga. News reports say other rebel groups are also involved. □

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This Oct. 25, 2004 file photo shows members of Destiny's Child, from left, Beyoncé Knowles, Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams at the Radio Music Awards at the Aladdin Theater for the Performing Arts in Las Vegas. Associated Press

Destiny's Child readies new song, compilation CD

NEW YORK (AP) — Destiny's Child is back together — for a new song.

The R&B trio announced Thursday they will release a new track called "Nuclear." The song is the group's first new offering since 2004.

"Nuclear" will appear on the compilation album, "Love Songs," out Jan. 29. It features 13 previously released Destiny Child's ballads, including the hits "Emotion" and "Cater 2 U."

"Nuclear" was produced by Pharrell, who co-wrote the song with Michelle Williams.

Destiny's Child, which include Williams, Beyoncé Knowles and Kelly Rowland, released its self-titled debut in 1998 with a fourth member. The group's sophomore album, "The Writing's on the Wall," came a year later and garnered multiple hits, but the success also shook up the foursome and Destiny's Child became a trio. □

Meredith Vieira leaving 'Millionaire'

DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — Meredith Vieira is leaving "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" after 11 years as host of the syndicated game show.

The former "Today" show host and two-time Emmy winner as best game show host said Thursday she's leaving for other ventures including more work at NBC News.

An executive familiar with Vieira's plans says Vieira will be launching her own YouTube channel with stories on people's lives. The executive spoke on condition of anonymity because the plans haven't been announced yet. Vieira also has her own production company. She produced the feature film "Return" and the touring play "Life in a Marital Institution (20 Years of Monogamy in One Terrifying Hour)." □

Source: Britney Spears out of 'X Factor'

LYNN ELBER,
AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Britney Spears is out of "The X Factor" after a season in which the pop star failed to deliver a ratings boost for the singing contest, a person familiar with the show's plans said Thursday. Creator Simon Cowell and fellow producers are discussing replacements for Spears and another panelist, record producer Antonio "L.A." Reid, said the person, who lacked authority to comment publicly and insisted of anonymity. Reid previously announced he was leaving after two seasons. Demi Lovato appears likely to return, joining Cowell on the revamped panel. The show is due to return in the fall.

The departures are yet another shake-up for "The X Factor," Cowell's attempt to strike magic with a U.S. version of his successful U.K. series. Cowell replaced panelists Paula Abdul and Nicole Scherzinger and host Steve Jones after a disappointing first season, and ratings dropped in the second season.

The December season finale drew 9.7 million viewers, compared to about 11 million for the first year's season-ender. Although the series has failed to match Cowell's bold pre-debut predictions, and certainly hasn't eclipsed sister Fox show "American Idol," it's helped shore up the network's fall schedule. Pop star Spears, however, proved less than a one-season wonder.

Combining fame and a history of erratic behavior, she was seen as a potential spark for better ratings. But reviewers faulted her for appearing inexpressive to the point of boredom and a repetitively dull use of the word "awesome."

On Tuesday, Fox network chief Kevin Reilly defended Spears, saying she was doing "a really good job" during a Q&A with the Television Critics Association.

"She came on, people remain fascinated with her and always will be," he said. "Maybe some peo-



This Nov. 5, 2012 file photo shows singer and celebrity judge Britney Spears at the "X-Factor" Finalists Party in Los Angeles. Associated Press

ple were waiting for more drastic displays of some nature that never came, so for those expecting that, it didn't happen."

Asked whether Fox would be on board to bring Spears back, Reilly replied

"yeah" — this despite the fact producers have been talking since Christmas about substitutes for her and Reid.

Mario Lopez and Khloe Kardashian joined the show as co-hosts this season. □

Justin Timberlake hints return to music in video

NEW YORK
(AP) — Is

Justin Timberlake bringing his music career back? The 31-year-old superstar has concentrated almost exclusively on his acting career over the last few years. But on Thursday, he posted a video on his



This Sept. 19, 2012 file photo shows singer-actor Justin Timberlake at the premiere of "Trouble With the Curve" in Los Angeles. Associated Press

website that showed him walking into a studio, putting on headphones and saying: "I'm ready."

Timberlake hasn't made an album since 2006's Grammy-winning "FutureSex/LoveSounds." In the video, Timberlake is also heard saying that he obsesses over his music and doesn't want to put music out that he doesn't love — and that you have to wait for music you love.

The video ends with a countdown to midnight Sunday. Timberlake — who recently married longtime girlfriend Jessica Biel — has been in several movies, including "The Social Network," "Bad Teacher," "Friends With Benefits" and last year's "Trouble With the Curve."

"FutureSex/LoveSounds," which won four Grammy Awards, launched three No. 1 hits and sold more than 4 million units in the United States. □

Child star of 'Beasts' taking Oscar nod in stride

DERRIK J. LANG

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) —

Quvenzhané Wallis was experiencing something of an internal struggle when she found out she'd been nominated for an Academy Award early Thursday morning.

"I woke up, and (my mother) said, 'You've been nominated! You're nominated!'" recalls Quvenzhané (Kuh-VAHN-zuh-nay) of learning she's up for the best actress prize at the 85th annual Oscars. "I was like, 'Oh my God!' But it was on the inside. It wasn't on the outside."

At 9 years old, the "Beasts of the Southern Wild" star is the youngest woman — ahem — girl to ever be nominated in the category.

"We were all literally losing our minds this morning, and she's totally taking it in stride," says "Beasts" writer-director Benh Zeitlin, who



This Jan. 8, 2013 photo released by Starpix shows actress Quvenzhané Wallis at the National Board of Review awards gala in New York.

Associated Press

is himself nominated in the directing and adapted screenplay categories. "It's magical. She's just poised and fearless. I saw that the first day I ever met her when she was five. To

this day, she just knows who she is, and she's confident."

Quvenzhané, who hails from Houma, La., about 60 miles southeast of New Orleans, was in Los Ange-

les Thursday to promote "Beasts" with Zeitlin, who lives in New Orleans. She was just 5 years old when she first auditioned for the film's lead role of Hushpuppy, a little girl struggling to survive with her ailing father in the southern Delta as a storm approaches.

Admittedly, Quvenzhané has never watched an Oscar telecast. ("Whenever they said you might make it to the Oscars, I was like, 'Who's Oscar? I don't know Oscar,'" she says.) When asked who she wants to meet at the star-studded ceremony, her answer is "everyone from the Disney Channel and Nickelodeon — but not Nick at Nite."

When it comes to fashion, Quvenzhané is open to wearing "all colors except for black by itself" on the big day, and she's not interested in wearing a really long gown.

"I might step on it," she explains, matter-of-factly.

Understandably, Quvenzhané isn't too aware of her competition, which includes the likes of Naomi Watts from "The Impossible" and Jessica Chastain from "Zero Dark Thirty." She does know one of her fellow best actress nominees: Emmanuelle Riva of "Amour." But that's only because she met her the day prior when the pair posed for a photo together. Both have something in common. Sorta. They're record breakers. At 85 years old, Riva is the oldest best actress nominee.

Despite her young age, with a Spirit Award nomination and a few other awards now under her belt, Quvenzhané is already adapting to Hollywood's awards season madness. That doesn't mean she's prepared to just stick to acting though. What's her ultimate goal?

"Actress-dentist," she says with a toothy grin. □

Montreux Jazz Festival founder Claude Nobs dies

JOHN HEILPRIN

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) —

Claude Nobs, the founder and general manager of the Montreux Jazz Festival, whose passion for music and artistry introduced generations of legendary musicians to international audiences on the Swiss stage, has died. He was 76. The Jazz Festival said Nobs, a native of Montreux, died Thursday after sustaining injuries from a fall while cross-country skiing nearby on Christmas Eve.

Nobs worked his way from being a chef and director of Montreux's tourism office, where he organized charity concerts, to overseeing one of the most iconic music festivals in the world.

On its website, the festival said Nobs' death came by "surprise as if to remind us once more, that in life as in music, each great performance could be the last one even if the show must



In this July 15, 2011 file photo Swiss Claude Nobs, founder and director of the Montreux Jazz Festival, speaks during the closing press conference during the 45th Montreux Jazz Festival, in Montreux, Switzerland.

Associated Press

go on." It was from a visit to the New York offices of Atlantic Records that the first festival in his home city was born in June 1967, featur-

ing musicians such as Keith Jarrett and Jack DeJohnette. The festival was an overnight success, building over the decades on

Nobs' passion for jazz, as much as his gumption and contacts abroad.

From that meeting in New York, Nobs went on to gain

career-forming introductions to musical greats such as Roberta Flack and Aretha Franklin, who would make her first European tour at his request. The musical acts at the festival also would gradually broaden to include rock and pop.

An early incident involving the rock group Deep Purple, which had come to Montreux to record an album after performing with Frank Zappa, became forever linked with Nobs.

During a fire at Zappa's concert in 1971, Nobs rushed to save several young concert-goers. Deep Purple's hit song, "Smoke on the Water," would memorialize the accident — Nobs as "Funky Claude" pulling kids to safety. Two years later, Nobs became director of the Swiss branch of Warner, Elektra and Atlantic, a position that gave him added clout to introduce heavyweights on the Montreux stage. □

He Who Knew Not



MAUREEN DOWD
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WASHINGTON – Everyone told me not to fall in love so quickly, that I'd get my heart broken. But I couldn't help it. Robert Griffin III and Alfred Morris, the stellar Redskins rookies, were such appealing palliatives to our ugly, nihilistic politics and our cascade of lurid sports scandals. Watching the magnetic newcomers last summer after I returned from covering Jerry Sandusky's maleficent trial in Bellefonte, Pa., made sports seem fresh again and gave Washington some rare forward momentum. The rookies put their hearts into every single play. But then, on Sunday, the spell snapped when the knee snapped. Coach Mike Shanahan committed malpractice, letting a hobbled young quarterback lurch around "like a pirate with a peg leg," as The Washington Post's Sally Jenkins wrote. The autocratic, crusty 60-year-old, who makes \$7 million a year, risked the kid's career and the team's future trying to win a wild-card playoff game – the opposite of what the Nationals did with Stephen Strasburg. At that moment, the Redskins became like the rest of Washington, and the rest of our self-centered, grasshopper-attention-span culture – going for short-term gain and avoiding long-term pain. Everything they do on Capitol Hill is about getting through the next few months, or next few minutes, or next confrontation. John Boehner, after making a mess of the negotiations with the president, is now talking about raising the debt limit in monthly increments. What's wrong with weekly, or how about hourly? Like Congress patching gaping fiscal wounds, the Redskins didn't seem to fathom that they were damaging the franchise long term. "Trying to win that game, they risked 120 victories over the next 10 years," the writer David Israel told me. "That's crazy." Shanahan had not been protecting his fearless phenom well all season and had let him start playing again too soon after RGIII sprained a ligament against Baltimore four weeks ago, reinjuring a right knee that had required surgery at Baylor. (Not to mention the concussion he suffered two months prior.) Dr. James Andrews, the sideline doctor and renowned orthopedic surgeon who was at the game in a goofy hat with pom-poms, told USA Today before Sunday's kickoff that "I've been

a nervous wreck letting him come back as quick as he has." He also said RGIII ran back into the Baltimore game without letting the doctors look at him or talk to him and that "scared the hell out of me." Shanahan told reporters that Andrews had given an OK for RGIII to go back in, but that turned out to be just a vague "high sign" from the surgeon as Griffin ran past. In a sport that has learned the horrific long-term impact of concussions, is that the best that can be done to protect headstrong young sports heroes?

The team handed over three first-round draft picks, a second-round pick and \$21 million to get RGIII. Shanahan should have known that you don't leave a life-altering decision to a gung-ho 22-year-old who thinks he's invincible – a kid who'd never been in the playoffs, amped up on adrenaline and conditioned from childhood to keep playing and to avoid the scorn that comes from fellow players if you opt out without severe enough injuries. Even though RGIII threw two touchdown passes in the first quarter, it was clear that his knee was not stable. When he couldn't plant his foot properly to throw a pass, he ran for the yardage; his knee buckled and he fell when nobody had even hit him. He tore off his helmet in a sign of distress. It was dumb football not to switch to the talented backup quarterback, Kirk Cousins, so the other players would have a chance to move forward and RGIII would not end up in the fourth quarter writhing on the ground, his leg bizarrely twisted, helpless to reach for a low snap at the 5-yard line. Shanahan said after the game that RGIII – who's headed to surgery this week, according to ESPN – told him he could play because he was "hurt" but not "injured," so "that was enough for me." Such Clintonian parsing makes you wonder if Shanahan was worried about the short life expectancy for losing coaches of Redskins owner Dan Snyder.

In his book "Think Like a Champion," Shanahan cites an Arabic saying he likes: "He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool. Shun him." The negligent coach – and, I'm sad to say, bullheaded quarterback – hurt their team and jeopardized their future. The once humble RGIII was sounding disturbingly like the legend he has yet to become, saying he had to stay in because he was "the best option for this team" and "you have to step up and be a man." As David Israel notes, "They've created a cult of personality around this kid. He might be the most personable quarterback in the world, but if he can't play, no one's going to want to follow him. In a Boy Scout troop, maybe, but not a football team."

If I want to see self-serving behavior, warped decision-making, dangerous rationalizations and chuckleheads mortgaging the future, I can go back to watching Congress. □



The Market And Mother Nature



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
© 2013 New York Times

Whenever I hear the word "cliff," I am reminded of something that President Barack Obama's science adviser, John Holdren, used to say about how we need to respond to climate change because no one can predict when it might take a disruptive, nonlinear turn. "We are driving toward a cliff in a fog," said Holdren about the climate, and that's always a good time "to start tapping on the brakes." Indeed, when you think about how much financial debt we've built up in the market and how much carbon debt we've built up in the atmosphere, the wisest thing we could do as a country today is to start tapping on the brakes in both emitting less carbon to bend the emissions curve down and racking up less debt to bend our debt-to-GDP curve down. Unfortunately, we are still doing neither. Indeed, we are actually taunting the two most powerful and merciless forces on the planet, the market and Mother Nature, at the same time. We're essentially saying to both of them: "Hey, what've you got, baby? No interest rate rises? A little bitty temperature increase? That's all you've got?" I just hope we get our act together before the market and Mother Nature each show us what they've got. Let's look at the huge carbon and financial deficits we're amassing. For thousands of years up to the dawn of the industrial age 200 years ago, the Earth's atmosphere contained 280 parts per million of the heat-trapping greenhouse

gas carbon dioxide. Today, that number is nearly 400 ppm, with 450 ppm routinely cited as the tipping point where we create the conditions for out-of-control acceleration.

Melting the permafrost in Alaska, Canada and Siberia, for example, would release massive amounts of carbon that would further increase global warming. Permafrost is packed with CO2 and frozen methane, which is 25 times more potent a greenhouse gas than CO2. "If the tundra continues melting," says Hal Harvey, the chief executive of Energy Innovation, "we could basically release the equivalent of all the carbon that all humanity has emitted from the start of history to now." That would really send temperatures soaring, ice melting and sea levels rising.

We're on a similar trajectory with our debt. Mounting deficits have driven America's debt-to-GDP ratio from 36.2 percent in 2007 to 72.8 percent today. In their widely hailed book on credit crises, "This Time Is Different," the economists Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff argue that countries that allow their debt-to-GDP ratios to exceed 90 percent experience slower growth and greater instability – much like hitting a climate tipping point. Indeed, they note, those who would point to low interest rates today as some kind of "all-clear" for more debt "should remember that market interest rates can change like the weather."

There is another striking parallel. At some point, when we allow so much carbon to build up in the atmosphere, our mightiest efforts to cut emissions through energy efficiency, conservation and new technologies will only enable us to stay in place. They won't be able to bend the curve downward anymore. And 450 ppm is not a place we want to get stuck. And, at some point, the debt will get so large that big tax increases and spending cuts will simply go to pay interest. We also won't be able to bend that curve anymore, and

spending on infrastructure, education and the poor will vanish. I am struck by how many liberals insist on reducing carbon emissions immediately but, on the deficit, say there is no urgency because no interest rates rises are in sight. And I am struck by how many conservatives insist we must reduce the deficit immediately but, on climate, say there is no urgency because, so far, temperature rise has been slight. (Although 2012 was the hottest year on record in the continental United States.) One reason interest rates are so low is that they are being suppressed by the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing. That won't last. As for the climate, well, "Mother Nature doesn't do quantitative easing," Harvey said. Beware of nonlinear moves in both.

We can't go off coal overnight, and we can't go into recession by cutting spending overnight, but we need to start tapping on the brakes in both realms by agreeing on spending cuts, tax increases and new investments that would be phased in as the economy improves, as well as higher efficiency standards for power plants, buildings, vehicles and appliances that would be phased in, too.

A carbon tax would reinforce and make both strategies easier. According to a September study by the Congressional Research Service, a small carbon tax of \$20 per ton – escalating by 5.6 percent annually – could cut the projected 10-year deficit by roughly 50 percent (from \$2.3 trillion down to \$1.1 trillion). What would you rather do to help solve our fiscal problem: Give up your home mortgage deduction and wait two more years for Social Security and Medicare, or pay a little extra for gasoline and electricity? These will be our choices. I'd rather pay the little carbon tax, especially since it would clean up the air for our kids, drive innovation and make us less dependent on the most unstable region in the world: the Middle East. How could a carbon tax not be on the table today? □

300 cats, minus the crazy

ANNE RAVER

© 2013 New York Times

PITTSBORO, N.C. – Like her name, Siglinda Scarpa seems to be from another world. And not just Italy, where she was born. But one in which you can hear the animals speak, and everyone gets along.

Scarpa, 72, lives in a wooden house painted robin's egg blue, in the middle of an open woodland, with old oaks and pines rising over sandy soil. With its second-story porches covered with the canes of Lady Banks' roses, Carolina jasmine and wisteria, the house could be something out of a children's book.

Some people come here to adopt a cat from the Goathouse Refuge, the animal sanctuary she runs, tucked back in the woods. Others come to buy her pottery or ceramic art, which is displayed in the sunny showroom on the first floor of this whimsical house: abstract pieces that evoke storms brewing in the sky; clay roasting pots shaped like squashes, with frogs or artichokes on their lids; or teacups molded like the face of a cat, the lines of cheek and jaw, nose and mouth drawn by a knowing hand.

For there are real cats everywhere. A white one sits as still as a snowy owl on a post overlooking the woodland. Others walk among dogs napping in the sun. More perch on the railing of a porch, staring at the birds zooming in and out of feeders beyond their reach.

Scarpa, who is barely 5 feet and as slim as a reed, with gray hair knotted over a moon-shaped face, appeared at the top of the porch stairs.

Umbra, which means shadow in Italian, is her soulful gray Labrador-Weimaraner mix with blue eyes. Musa, her muse, looks like a little coyote. Sole, her sunny boy, is a huge white Great Pyrenees with jet-black eyes.

The dogs looked up, as if to say, "We were just having some fun."

Upstairs, in the sunny kitchen, were more cats – sitting

on tables and chairs, napping under the wood stove or beside a snoozing dog on the couch, and nestled in the big wooden bowl Scarpa carved from an oak downed by a storm.

If you are picturing a crazy lady living among mountains of newspapers, with a pack of yowling cats stinking up the place, forget it. Even on a winter day, there is a pine-scented breeze. The potbellied wood stove keeps everything so cozy that the windows and doors are open, so the cats (42 at last count) and dogs (seven) can come and go as they please.

Roger Manley, the curator of the Gregg Museum at North Carolina State University, where Scarpa's ceramic art will be exhibited next fall, calls her "the Mother Teresa of animals" and compares her to Albert Schweitzer, "taking care of everybody, out in the woods."

And her home, he said, is "so calm and serene – like a spa for cats."

It was a tiny kitten, nearly



Siglinda Scarpa hugs one of her cats at her home in Pittsboro, N.C.

(Jeremy M. Lange/The New York Times)

with an order of merit by the president of the republic before he died in 2007.) "I always felt that people were not seeing me," she said. "That they were talking, but never to me." Then one night, after she was in bed, her father brought her a tiny gray tabby. "He lifted up the blanket and put this little frozen thing on my chest," she

Less than a year later, she found these 16 acres in the woods, with a goat and a shed and a nondescript house she turned into an aerie. (She still owns property in Italy, which she rents out, although she hasn't been back since moving here.) The Goathouse Refuge takes its name from a goat that came with the property and two others

threw him away," Scarpa said.

Alex, just rescued from a kill shelter, hides beneath a blanket, with sad eyes.

"Some of them grieve for the families that abandon them," Scarpa said. "I have to force-feed them, or they would die."

Gibson was found cuddled next to the musician who loved him, who had died in his trailer.

"Gibson always comes up to the back porch when music is on the radio," Scarpa said.

Dr. James Floyd, a veterinarian and former head of the department of farm animal health and resource management at North Carolina State, met Scarpa years ago, when she called his office about a sick goat.

He also helped her with a chicken that had a tumor and a leg that had to be amputated.

"I'd never amputated the leg of a chicken," he said. (They aren't usually deemed worth the effort.) "Coccolona was its name, and that darned chicken lived another 18 months in Siglinda's studio," he said. "Siglinda bonded with that chicken, and I can't swear that I don't think that it knew who she was and responded to her."

Scarpa said she plans to be buried under the oak tree where the animals are buried.

"This is my home," she said. "These are my babies." □



Cats in Siglinda Scarpa's home in Pittsboro, N.C. Scarpa runs the Goathouse Refuge, a no-kill animal sanctuary in the woods with over 250 cats, and has 42 cats in her own home.

(Jeremy M. Lange/The New York Times)

drowned in a storm, that changed the course of Scarpa's life when she was 7.

"I think I was a little autistic, but they didn't have a name for it then," she said. Maybe it was the sound of the bombers over her family's house in northwest Italy during World War II, or hiding from the Gestapo, which was chasing her father, Sergio. (He helped draft the constitution of the Italian Republic, was a member of the Italian Parliament and was honored

said. "I held that kitty with such love. He changed my loneliness. I could understand everything he wanted and he could understand me."

That was when she really started talking.

"I had to explain to my mother what the cat was saying," she said.

On a visit to central North Carolina in 1995, she fell in love with the balmy climate and the people.

"It feels more like Italy here, the weather and the vegetation," she said.

who live in a pasture now. But it is actually a no-kill shelter for cats that roam cage-free on 1 1/2 acres of fenced woodland.

Scarpa knows every cat's name and story, be it a new arrival or one of the lucky ones napping on her couch.

Rosa has asthma and takes medication. Walter is recovering from mouth surgery. Tigger, who is deaf, has trust issues.

"The guy who had him fell in love with a lady who didn't want the cat, so he